

T H E
Queene of Nauarres
Tales.

Containing,
Verie pleasant Discourses
of fortunate Louers.

*Now newly translated out of French
into English.*



LONDON,
Printed by V.S. for Iohn Oxenbridge,
and are to be solde at his thop in Paules
churchyard at the sign of the
Parot 1597



To his Majesty the King

James O. [illegible]

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To his assured good friend
I. O. Stationer.



Ir, you hauing manie times
beene in hand with me about
a booke intituled, *The Queene
of Nauarres Tales*; which (as
you say) you haue caused to
be translated out of French, at
your proper charges, on mind
to Print it, and you haue seuerall times bin in hand
with me to write you a Preface. You know I ne-
uer read the Booke, and therefore I am not able to
say what argument it holdeth, nor otherwise what
it concerns, which were behouefull to be knowne
to him that shal write a Preface: but the Title is e-
nough to grace the Booke, bearing the name of *the
Queene of Nauarres Tales*; whereby any man may
coniecture that the contentes are some pithie Dis-
courses, written for pleasure and recreation: and so
great a Princesse vouchsafing so to honour them
with her owne name, who can thinke but that the
pleasure is contained within the limits both of wit
& modesty? For the curious conceited fellows that
liue now in the world, thogh not possesst with any

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great store of malice nor wit, but are yet of such a fine iesting humor, that they wil dry-bob any man that writes, of what subiect soeuer. In steade of a Preface I will present them with a peece of an olde tale, a fiction, and fained, I know not by whom; but if the Author wil not be found, let me father it my selfe, the fable is this.

Nature hauing many yeares agoe so wasted her treasures, in the persiting of womans beauties, that by her former prodigalitie, her perfections are so consumed and spent, that the women of this age are enforced to supply their defects by periwigs & painting, by bombasting, and bolstering, and such other artificiall helps; the poore Lady (finding her owne scarcitie, not able to performe that excellencie, as before she had done in the feminine sex) determined yet to make prooffe, and to trie her cunning what she could do in the masculine. Vnder-taking the taske, with this settled curiositie, she proportioned a man of such excellent perfection in all his limbs and lineaments, that Nature herselfe began to wonder at her owne worke: and as the curious Artificer, who thinkes his labor to be but lost, that is still concealed and neuer brought to light, so Nature bringing forth this superexcellent personage to be viewed, appointed him in such a place where the people of seuerall Nations had their continuall recourse: the first that passed by was a Spaniard, who taking a full suruey of this new formed man, crossing himselfe, both his forehead & breast; then throwing vp his handes with admiration to the heauens, hee saide with a lowde voice; O most glori-

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glorious & excellent creature in countenance, more amiable and lovely than our lady of *Loretta*, in personage more comly than *S. Iago of Compostella*: but how shall I extoll thy prayles? my comparisons are too weake; I will therefore leaue thee and blesse Nature, who hath blessed her selfe in featuring of thee. Nature that stoode fast by, where she might both heare and see, and yet vnscene her selfe, was wel pleased with this first salutation, and the Spaniard thus departed. The next that came by was an Italian, and he (as the Spaniard before, but with a litle more circumspection) taking the view of this goodly creature, fell first into a fit of wondering; from that, into an extasie of praising, then to protesting, that for a thousand duckats hee would not haue his wife to haue a sight of this temptation: and now he fell to swearing, that to preuent all perills, he would keepe her still lockt vp in a chamber, and thus he went his way. With this Nature smiled to see the passionate demeanor of the iealous headed Italian. And let it suffice that I deliuer (though not in this particular sort) how the people of sundry other Nations as they passed by, what praises and commendations they would all of them attribute to this handiworke of Nature, imputing it to bee without fault, blemish, imperfection, or any maner of defect: till at the last there fortun'd to come by an Englishman, I think some of the same travelling fellows whereof there are some; that running thorow the world to seeke new fashions abroad, doe lose al their wits that they carried with them from home; or perhaps it might be some worthy souldi-

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er, that if he hath but discharged a case of pisse-pots out of a Gentlemans chamber, scene an Ensigne three times spread in the field, puts himselfe by and by into the arming doublet, the poyntes with the great siluer tagges, tied in the pitch of the shoulder: then at euery word he must be caled Mas Captain: then if hee haue but learned thus much of the new Discipline, as to say, Double your Rankes on the right hand, now againe as you were, double your Files on the left hand, close your Ranks, open your Files: why so, this is enough to make him able to coofin an hundred and fiftie souldiers of their pay. Now for table-talk you shal heare nothing out of their mouths, but of the scaling of forts, the assaul-ting of breaches, the taking of citidales, & by theyr words they will seeme to vndertake the winning of a greater towne than *Lysbourn*, but with discharging two or three volies of oths. To conclude, when they are angrie, there is nothing in their mouths but the stab; and when they are pleased, their greatest friendship is not worth an ordinary of eightene pence. I speake not to preiudice anie gentleman that hath travelled for his owne experi-ence, whereof there bee many worthy of commen-dations, nor to disgrace any souldier that is of de-fert, whereof there are none but are worthy of ho-nour: but I speake of those counterfeit Compani-ons, that vnder these titles and pretenses do coun-tenaunce themselves, taking authoritie to slander, iest, scotte, and find fault at any thing. One of these priuiledged people now passing along the streete, his gesture so gouerned as if he caried a whole com-

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mon wealth in his head, his eyes so fixed as if hee were in the meditation of his mistresse, his countenance so graced, as a man might see a dicker of fools in his face, his salutation to such as passed by was a nod with his head, and his hand clapt ouer his lips, which they do call the *Bassiles manus*, his speeches compendious and shorte, nothing but sentences: this finicall fellow being now come to the place where Nature was yet abiding, reioycing to heare herselfe so glorified for this excelencie of her work, he began as the rest had done, to suruey euery part, euery proportion and lineament, from the top to the toe, he went about him, and round about him, behinde, and before, prying, and beholding wyth more curiosity than any of the rest had done before him, and when he had lookt til he was wearie, said neuer a word, but shaking a little his head was going away, till nature seeing this strange demeanor called him backe, and in curteous sort demaunded of him how he liked of the obiekt, that hee had so aduisedly perused: to the which he answered; In faith it is not to be misliked, it is a very goodly presence, handsome, comely, God had done his part, and he saw nothing but the man was well inough. But I pray saide Nature againe, what is it that you mislike? I perceiue by your speeches there is something amisse, and therefore tell me what it is that you do thinke might be amended. Gentlewoman (saide he) seeing you presse me so farre, I wil deale plainly with you; the fault that I finde is this, It is pittie that he is not an English man borne, but if hee had beene an English man borne, I could then haue
com-

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commended these perfections, which I will now
forbear. And it is pitie (said Nature) that thou art
an Englishman borne; for if thou wert not an En-
glishman borne, I woulde so display thy imperfe-
ctions, which in regard of that renowned Nation
now I wil omit. This poore pedant meeting with
such a counter-buffe, thought it not good to fall a
scolding with a Gentlewoman, but caling her curst
queane, went his way scratching of his head. And
here an end of an olde tale.

Now M. Oxenbridge I wil direct my text again
to your priuate selfe, how shal you and I escape the
gentle frump from these same perillous conceited
fellowes, that will not omit to finde a fault at anie
thing, nor wil not forbear to breake a iest vppon
any man? mary Ile tell you how weele stop their
mouthes if we can, wee wil giue them the foole a-
forehand: I do not meane to any friendly Reader,
that will sooner winke at a fault, than finde a fault,
but to these mungrell cures, that although they
cannot bite, will yet stand aloofe and barke. And
this *Misacmos* in his Apologie of Ajax saith is a fi-
gure, and he calles it *Prolepsis* or Preuention. Now
if we by giuing the foole aforehand, could preuent
them that they should not snarle at vs, twere a pre-
ty trick. And why not? For now I remember me,
I knew the practise of it long before I knewe *Mi-
sacmos*, and learned it of a Gentlewoman that had
borne a bastard before shee was married, who for
preuention sake would cal whoore first, & would
raise slanderous reportes of euery other woman,
how honest soeuer, because she would brand them
all

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all with her owne marke. Call you this a Figure? No sir, it was wit, and I warrant you it proceeded from a very quicke conceit: as how? Mary shee would not venture vpon a husband, til she had made triall how she was able to endure the bearing of a child: for *Omnia probata* wit trieth all things. Sir, I do commend her for her wit; but by your leaue, if my wife were but halfe so wise, I would thinke that a Carre were fitter for her than a Coach.

Well, I thanke you *Misactmos*, we haue made a little bold with your Figure, and I hope without offence; and I see preuention is very good, but I like not of his preuention, that being a knowne cuckold himselfe, and to preuent ill language, woulde hang hornes in the night at his neighbours doore: Like to a cunning fellowe that I know, I will not say a Conie-catcher, but a scaulled squire named *Will Cogge*, a trencher scraping cullion but this other day, who in lesse then a yeares cogging (being skiltull in that facultie) hath got more, then now by his trade heele get these seuen yeeres. This Canniball (I say) in the night would hang vp horns at his neighbors doors, that they might seeme as shamefull to the worlde, as hee shamelesse: and now associating himselfe with one, a iolly fellowe, who though hee seeme to the view of the world (by the cariage of his body) a well accomplisht K: at armes, yet otherwayes, but a paulty shifting wenching companion, when a man hath made the best of him; who because hee might not haue the maidenhead of his neighbors wife the first night, but lacke Drummers entertainment, after hee had shamefully demaunded it, runnes vp and downe

B

(threat-

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(threatning highly) in his hose and dublet like a masterlesse man, with his collar turned downe round about his necke, making way for the halter, as one that were going to be hangd, to mince them as small as flesh to the pot. Well, birdes of a feather will hang together; these two, knaves I found them, & knaves I leave them, and that is all the reckoning I make of them. Well, let them winch that are rubbed on the gall, but if they kicke, I will stand aloofe and crie, guppe olde lade are you coltish? And when I haue a little laughed, I will leane my selfe to this olde axiome, *Qui maccat maccabitur*; the which in our mother tongue may thus be interpreted, shee is a forie Lady that hath neuer a Ioynter. Thus M. Oxenbridge, if you shall accept of these lines thus hastily hatched, I hope the curteous Reader will not be offended, and for the malicious I care not. Thus with my commendations to your selfe I ende.

Your assured friend, A. B.



The Queene of Nauarres Tales.

The first Nouell.

Of a woman of Alancon that had two friends, one for pleasure, the other for profite, which caused one of them to be killed that first perceived her deceit, for the which shee obtained a pardon both for her selfe and her husband that was fled, who after that to saue a peece of money wherein hee was condemned, sought counsell of a Coniurer; but his enterprice being discovered, they were both punished.



In the Towne of Alancon, in the time of Duke Charles that last deceased, there dwelt an Attourney that had married a gentlewoman of that countrey, more faire than honest; who by reason of her beauty, together with her lightnes, was greatly sought vnto by a religious man, whose name I will conceale, for the reuerence of their state, who to attaine to his desire, entertained her husband so wel, and bled him so friendly, that being blinded with simplicitie, could not perceiue the lewdnes of his wife: but which is more, caused him to forget the affection that hee alwayes had to the seruice of his master and mistris, in such sort, that of a faithful seruant, he became so contrary, that in fine he sought by Coniurations to bring the Dutchesse to her end. This priest liued long time, in that maner with this wicked woman, which obeyed him

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him more for desire of money than for loue, as also that her husband ceased not to incite her thereunto. But there was a yong man in the said towne of Alancon, sonne to the lieutenant generall, whom she loued with so great affection, that for his loue she was in a maner halfe beside her wits. Wherein oftentimes she holp herselfe by the priests means, by sending her husband forth, whereby hee being busied, shee might with better leisure visit the lieutenants sonne. This manner of behauiour continued so long time, that for her profit she entertained the priest, and for her pleasure receiued the other, vnto whom she swore that al the entertainment she gaue vnto the priest was only by that means freely to vse his companie, and that whatsoeuer passed betweene them yet she saide the priest had obtained naught of her but wordes, and that he might be wel assured, that neuer any man but himselfe should reape other pleasure at her hands. Upon a day as her husband went to see the priest, she asked him leaue to goe into the countrey, saying that the aire of the citie was somewhat contagious for her: and being at her country house, she wrote vnto the lieutenants sonne that he shoulde not faile about ten of the clocke at night to come vnto her, which he failed not to doe: but at the doore he found the maid that vsed to let him in, who spake vnto him and said; Friend, you must now go walke some other way, for your place is taken vp. Hee thinking her husband had bin come, asked her the cause: wherewith the poore maide pittying his estate, and perceiuing him to be so fayre, and honest a yong man, and one that loued so wel, and so litle beloued againe, opened her mistris folie vnto him, thinking that when he vnderstoode thereof, hee woulde blame himselfe for louing so constantly. She told him that the priest was but newly come thither, and gone to bed to her mistris, whom at that time she looked not for, in that she had not appointed him to come before the next day; but he hauing busied her husband about his affaires, was secretly come that night to visite her. If any man euer dispaired, assure your selues it was the lieutenants sonne, who for that time would scant beleue it. But

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to trie the truth, he stayed at a house hard by till he sawe the priest come forth, not so wel disguised but that he knew him better than he would. In which dispayre hee went to Alanson, whither, not long time after, his counterfeit friend returned, who thinking to abuse him, as she had often done, went to speake with him: but hee saide shee was too holy (having touched consecrated things) to speake with him being so miserable a sinner as he was, whose repentance was so great that he hoped it could soone be pardoned. When she perceiued her wanton life discovered, and that neither excuse, nor he, nor promise neuer to do it againe would aught preuaile, she made complaint vnto the priest. And hauing consulted with him, went and told her husband, that shee coulde no longer stay in Alanson, because the lieutenants sonne whome shee accounted for her friend sought continually to dishonour her, whereupon she desired him to giue her leave to stay at Argenton, thereby to cease suspicion: her husband that suffered himselfe to be ruled by her, yeelded to her request. They were not long at Argenton, but this wicked woman sent worde vnto the lieutenants sonne, that shee thought him the wickedest man at that time liuing on earth, and that shee had heard that hee ceased not openly to speake euil of hir and of the priest, for the which she swore she would be reuenged. The young man that neuer had spoken thereof but to her selfe, and that feared the priests displeasure, with two of his seruants went strait vnto Argenton, and found the woman in the Iacobins Church at euening prayer, where hee went and kneeled downe hard by her, and said vnto her: Gentlewoman, I am come hither to protest vnto you by the liuing God, that I neuer spake to any man of you to your dishonour, but only to your selfe, and yet you haue committed so heynous an offence in my behalfe, as I haue not vsed halfe so many intemperate speeches in your behalfe as you deserue; for if either man or woman will affirme that euer they heard it from my mouth, I am come hither before your face to proue them liars. Shee perceiuing many people to be in the church, and that he was accompanied with

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two lusty servingmen, spake as softly as she could saying vnto him, she doubted not but he said the truth, & that she counted him too honest to speake euil of any woman in the world, specially of her, being one that loued him wel, but she saide her husband had some inkling thereof, wherefore she desired him that he would cleare himselfe before him, whereby hee might be thorowly perswaded of her honestie, which hee agreed vnto, and thinking to bring her home, tooke her by the arme: but she tolde him it was not good for him to goe with her, for if he should, her husband would conceiue that shee had caused him to come. And therewith taking one of his men by the cloke, she said vnto him, let your man goe with mee, and when time serueth, I wil send him to fetch you, meane time goe you vnto your lodging: hee not fearing her conspiracie, went thither, and she being at home made his man that went with her to stay to supper, who demanded of her oftentimes when hee should fetch his maister: she answered hee would come time enough. When midnight came, she sent one of her seruants secretly to fetch him, who nothing doubting her pretended mischiese, went boldly to saint Aignans house, where the gentlewoman stayed his seruant, whereby he had but one with him. And when he was at the doore, her seruant told him, that his mistris would faine speake with him before her husband, and that she stayed for him in a chamber, only with his owne seruant, saying he should do wel to send him home, which he presently did: and going by a paire of darke staires, the Attourney that had set men to watch in a chamber hard by, hearing the noyse of his feete, asked who went there, and it was told him it was a man that would secretly come into his house. With that one Thomas Gager, a common murderer, and by the Attourney hyed for the purpose, strooke so many blowes with his sword at the poore young man, that what defence soeuer he made, hee could not saue his life, but was presently slaine. His man that in the meane time was talking with the Gentlewoman, saide vnto her, I thinke I heard my maister on the staires, I will go see. But she made him

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him stay and said; take you no care he will come loone enough.
But not long after hearing his master say, alas, I am dead,
Lord receiue my soule, he said he would go help him: yet the
fil held him saying, doubt not, it is nothing but that my hus-
band hath taught him how to leaue his youthful tricks: let vs
go see; and looking downe from the Raies head, asked her
husband what the matter was, saying, what haue you done?
who replied, come downe and see. Nowe haue I reuenged
you of him that sought you so much shame, & saying so, with
a poinpard that he had, thrust ten or twelue blowes into his
belly being dead, that liuing he durst not assault. After the
murder done, and that the dead Gentlemans seruantes were
both fled, to certifie his father: the saide Aignan knowing it
could not be concealed, and that the Gentlemans seruantes
could not be allowed as witnesses in lawe; and that not a
man in the house had seene it done, but only the murderers,
an old maid, and a pong wench of fiftene yeres old, thought
secretly to take the old maid, but she found meanes to escape
away, and fled into the Iacobins church, being the surest wit-
nesse to proue the murder. The wench for a time stayed
within the house; but he found such meanes, that one of the
murderers wooed her, and he falling in loue with her led her
to Paris, and there kept her in the common stews, by the
which meanes she was not a lawful witnesse. And the better
to hide the murder, he caused the dead body to be burnt, and
the bones that were not consumed, to be putte into a mortar
and stamped to powder; sending in al haste vnto the Court, to
aske a pardon, giuing it to vnderstand, that he had oftentimes
forbidden his house to a certaine pong man, whom he suspect-
ed in his wifes behalfe, who notwithstanding was come
thither by night, secretly to speake with her, and finding him
at her chamber doore, more filled with rage than reason, had
slaine him. But hee could not so soone dispatch his letter to
the chancellor; but the Duke and the Duchesse by the father
of the dead man were certified thereof, who to stay his pardon,
wrote letters to the contrary. Whereuppon the unhappy
wretch

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Isabel perceiuing he could by no means obtaine it, fled with his wife, and diuers of his kindred into England: but before his departure he said vnto the murderer, (who at his request had done the deede) that he had receiued expresse letters from the King to take him, and cause him to be hanged: but in respect of the seruice he had done, hee saide hee was content to save his life, and therewith gaue him tenne crownes to flee out of the realme. Which he presently did, and neuer was scene againe. But the murder was so well prooued and manifested, not onely by the seruants of the dead man, but by the maide that saued her selfe in the Iacobins church, as also by the bones found within the mortar, that in the absence of the said S. Aignan and his wife, the proces was made and sued against them, whereby they were both condemned by default, and iudged to be hanged, their goods confiscate to the prince, and 1500. crownes giuen to the father of the dead man, for the charge of the suite. Meane time the said S. Aignan being in England, and seeing that by course of law he was condemned in France, did so much by his seruice vnto diuers Noblemen, as also by the meanes of his wiues kinsmen, that the King of England wrote vnto the king to grant him pardon, and to restore him to his goodes and credite againe. But the king hauing understoode the heinoulnesse of the fact, sent the copie of the proces vnto the king of England, desiring him to looke into it, and to consider whether such a fact deserued pardon: certifying him likewise, that the duke of A laiton one of his had that priuiledge within his realme, to grant pardons for all faulces committed within his Durhie. Al these excuses notwithstanding, the king of England did not content himselfe, but wrote so earnestly therein, that in fine at his request, the Attourney obtained his pardon, and thereby returned into France. But being at home, the better to accomplish his iniquities, hee acquainted himselfe with a certaine conuicer named Gallery, hoping by his meanes and diuellish art, to be exempted from paying the said fiftene hundred crownes to the dead mans father. Which to effect, hee and his wife

went

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went disguised vnto Paris; where his wife percelling her husband with the said Gallery to be so long time shut up into a chamber, and made not her acquainted with the cause; one morning she watched them; and saide Gallery shew her husband five Images of wood, wherof thre had their handes hanging downe, and two held vp their handes, and speaking vnto him said, we must make the like Images in ware, and they that haue their armes hanging downe, shall be the Images of such persons as we meane to consume to death, but those that hold them vp, shall be for those of whom we meane to win the fauour. Then the Attourney said, this shall be for the king, of whome I will be loued. and this for Monsieur Brillon Chancelloz of Alanson. Gallery said, you must set the Images vnder the alter where masse is usually said, with certaine wordes, which as then (said he) I wil cause you to pronounce: and speaking of the images that held their armes downe, the Attourney saide, that one of them was for Master Giles de Mesnil the dead mans father, as knowing wel, that as long as he liued, he would neuer leaue the suer, & one of the images, made for women that had the armes hanging downe shall be (said he) for my Lady the Dutches of Alanson the kings sister, because she loued her olde seruaunt Don Mesnil so wel, and to the contrary, knew so much of the attourneys villany, that if she died not he could not liue: and the second image of a woman hauing the armes downeward, hee said was for his wife, as being cause of all his mischief, being well assured, she neuer would amend her life. When his wife that saw all this through the key hole of the doore, and understood he placed her among the dead, thought it better to send him thither first: so that making as though she went to borrow money of her vncle; being maister of Requests vnto the Duke, shewed him what she had heard and seene her husband do. Her vncle like a trusty old seruiltoz to the duke went vnto the Chancelloz of Alanson, aduertising him therof: and because the Duke and the Dutchesse of Alanson were not at that day at the Court, the Chancelloz went and tolde it to
the

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the King, Regent the Queene mother, and likewise to the Duchesse, who presently sent for the parson of Paris called Le Basre, who made such haste, that he took the assizes and Gallery his Committee, who came out to the of this conference confess their fault. Whereupon their prayers being made, was carried to the King, to whom (some of the Court being thus to save themselves) shew in their behalf, that by their inchantments, they sought but only to wound his father, and not to destroy him. But the King having his fathers life as dear as his owne, commanded that judgement should be given as strict as manner as if they had perjured his own word. Nevertheless the Duchesse of Alencon his sister, besought him to save the Attornies life, and to change his death into some lesser and grievous corporall paine, which was granted her, so that he and Gallery were sent to Pariselle, there to rot in the galleys of Saint Blancourt, where in they ended their days in great repentance, and thereby had means to confesse and acknowledge the greatness of their sinnes: and the wicked woman in the absence of her husband continued in her wickedness more than ever she was before, which inferreth

The second Novel:

The pitiful and chaste death of the wife of one of the
Ministers of the Queen of Navarre.


 Here dwelt in the towne of Ambrois a mulier
 that serued the Queene of Navarre. Sister to
 Braunces the French king, whose house lay in
 chaberd of a ferme within the Citie of Blois
 whither she sold excellent white currieus for
 quarters wages. leaving his wife at Ambrois. longing be-
 yond the bridges: now he had a servant that of long time had
 so desperately loved his wife, that upon a certain day he
 could not choose but mornie in to her: but she being an ho-
 nest woman, took it for a shame that she should so reproude
 him.

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him; but threatened to cause her husband to heat him, whereby he neuer after durst venture to speake unto her, or shew her any countenance thereof, keeping it secret in his heart untill such time his master was gone abroad, and his mistress in a church (a church belonging to the castle, and standing faire from thence) at evening prayer. And he being at home without company, it came in his minde to seek that by force and violence, which by prayer and seruice he could neuer obtaine, and so that he brake a plank out of the wall, between the chamber of his mistress, and that where he lay, which he ranke the side of the bed, as wel of his master and mistress, as of the seruantes on the other side stonde, close unto the wall, could not be perceiued, whereby his wicked pretence coulde neuer be espied, till upon a time, she being in bed with a yong wench of eleven or twelue yeares old, and in her first sleepe, this villaine in his swit entered through the saide hole into the chamber with his naked sword in his hand: but as soone as she felt him by her, she quickly sprang out of the bed, demanding him by all meanes and exhortations, that possibly an honest woman coulde deuise; but he that had naught but beastly loue, and better vnderstood in the Beules language, than her honest reasons, shewed himselfe brastlier than those beasts with whom he had long continued: for perceiuing that she ranne so fast about a table that he coulde not haue his will, as also that she was so strong, that she had twice loosed her selfe out of his hands, being in dispaire neuer to haue his pleasure while she liued, gaue her a great blowe vpon the reines, thinking, that if neither feare nor force coulde make her peece, yet paine would doe it: but he found the contrary, for that euen as a good souldier, perceiuing his blood, is thereby more moued to reuenge himselfe, and winne his honour, so her chaste heart enforced her much more to runne and flie out of the villaines hands, alwaies giuing him the fairest words she coulde, thinking by such meanes to make him knowe his fault: but to the contrary he was so furious, that by no means he wold be ruled by her good counsel, giuing her diuers other blowes,

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which to drop, she neuer ceased to runne, as long as her legs would hold. But in the end, when with the losse of so much blood she felt her death approach, lifting her eyes to heauen, and holding vp her hands, she yielded thanks to God, whom she named her sorce, her vertue, her patience, and her chastitie, beseeching him to accept that blood (which to obey his commaundment) she then had shed in reuerence of Christ. Ihesus his sonne, whereby she steadfastly beleued all her sinns to be forgiven; and saying, Lord receiue the soule that by thy mercie hath freely bene redeemed, she fell with her face vpon the ground; and being fallen, the wicked villaine gaue her diuers blows; wherewith hauing lost her speech, and strength of body failing, the villaine tooke by force that which shee for want of strength could not defend. And hauing satisfied his filthy lust, fled so hastily, that neuer after (what meanes soeuer was wrought) he could be found. Meane time the young wench that lay with the Villiers wife, with feare crept vnder the bed: but perceiuing the man to be gone, came out, and finding her mistress to be without either speech or feeling, shee cried at the window to the neighbors round about for helpe; whereat such as loved and liked her well came presently vnto her, bringing Surgeons with them, and found she had receiued fife and twenty deadly wounds vpon hir body, which, as much as in them lay they sought to heale; but all in vaine: neuerthelesse, shee languished without speech in that sort for the space of one whole houre, moued her hands, and eyes, whereby she shewed not to haue lost her memorie; and being by a priest examined of her faith, shee made thereof such euident signs, as that by word of mouth she could not haue done better, shewing that her trust was in the death of Ihesus Christ, whom she hoped shortly to behold within his heauenly seate: and so with a cheerefull countenance, her eyes looking vp to heauen, she yielded her chaste body vnto the earth, and her soule vnto the Lord: and being taken vp, and her bodie wound and set before the doore, staying for company to bring her to her graue, her husband chaunced to come home, where he

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he espied his dead wife standing at the doore before he knewe
thereof: and hauing inquired of the cause, had double reason
to be grieved thereat, whereby he fell so sicke, that hardly he
escaped death. In this manner that martire of chastite was
buried in saint Iulianes Church, whither all the honest
wives within the towne failed not to beare her company, ac-
counting themselves most happy to be of such a towne where
so vertuous a woman was found: and therewith those that
were not so wise, but lighter of behauiour, seeing the honour
done vnto that body, determined from that time forthwarden to
change their wicked liues.

The third Nouell.

Of A King of Naples abusing a Gentlemans wife, in the
end ware hornes himselfe.

Because Gentlewomen (saide Saffredane) I
haue often wished my selfe to be companion in
the fortune of him, whereof I meane to speake,
I will shew you that in the citie of Naples in
the time of king Alphonsus, whose lasciuious
life was his Scepter, there was a Gentleman so honest, faire
and cutteous, that by reason of his perfections an olde Gen-
tleman gaue him his daughter in marriage, that for beautie
and good grace was nothing inferior to him, who loued well
together, vntill Shrouetide after, that the King in masking
went from house to house to sport himselfe, wherein eache
man enforced themselves, to honour him as they could: and
when he came to the Gentlemans house, he was receiued and
entertained much better than else-where, as well with ban-
quets, as with musike, and the fairest wife (in his mind) that
euer he had seene, who after the banquet was doone, shee and
her husband sang a song with so good grace, that it increased
her beautie: wherewith the king perceiuing two perfections in

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one howe to take not so much delight in their pleasant houses,
as in deuising how to breake the crowne: but the difficulty he
found, was, the great and perfect love he saw to be in them,
which made him heare that passion in his minde as carefully
as he could: but to ease himselfe, he caused certaine banquets
to be made, for all the Ladies and Gentlewomen within the
Cittie of Naples, where the Gentleman and his wife were
not forgotten. And because a man is easily induced to be-
leeue whatsoeuer he seeth, it seemed the Gentlewoman eies
promised him some good fortune, if the husband and she
were no hinderance thereunto: and to proue it, he sent her hus-
band for 15. dayes or three weekes on message vnto Rome,
who was no sooner gone, but his wife that neuer had bin so
long without his company, made exceeding sorrow: but be-
ing in his absence often visited by the king, as time and lea-
sure serued, both with faire speeches, presents, and with
giftes, she was not onely comforted, but well content her hus-
band should stay longer: and before the three weekes ended,
when he should returne, she waxed so amorous of the king,
that she was as much grieued at his coming againe, as she
had bene sorrowfull for his going. And not to loose the
presence of the king, they agreed, that when her husband went
into the country, she would make it known to him, who ther-
by might assuredly come to her, and so secretly, that the man
whome she feared more than her owne conscience, should not
be hurt: in hope whereof this Gentlewoman was ioyfull, so
that at her husbands returne she seemed very glad, who al-
though he heard that in his absence, the king had often visited
his wife, yet he suspected no ill, but in paces of time, that she
so hardly to be couered, beganne by little and little to shew, as
such manner, that the husband in thend doubted some deceit,
keeping so good watch, that he was therof assured: but by re-
son of the feare he had of him, that did him iniury, he made no
doubt therof, determining to dissemble, as desiring rather to
live in secret griefe, than once to hazard his life for a woman
that had no love in her. Nevertheless, in that despite her
thought

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thought respect shall be unto the king, if possibly he might be
and knowing that oftentimes bright maketh women too
more than lowly, specially such as haue great wittes, and be
worthy minded, he being in the court & presence was so bold
to say unto her, that it pitted him to see her not so well beloved
yet of the king as she deserved. He then unto the Queene
that knew the love the king bare to his wife, answered him,
and said, I praye to God you haue honoy and pleasure at one time,
I knowe I haue the wittes, but another respect the pleasure,
and she hath both pleasure yet hath she not the honoy. He
that perceived full well why she desired that speech, answered
he and said, I praye you, your honour proceede from birth,
and being so well born, that any degree cannot augment your
glory, but your highnesse beauty, grace, and honesty, hath de-
served so much pleasure, that she which taketh that from you
that is your due, doth her selfe more wrong than you, for that
for a certaine glory, which turneth to shame, she loseth a
much pleasure as you or any Gentlewoman in this land can
haue. And thus much speaking, and telling thus to the king
would he haue done after, I thinke he should haue had ad-
uantage amonge his courtiers to please womanly, being well assured
therof, that to concern himselfe in perlow as you selfe, it would
be better for him than the want of his complexion. The queene
laughing and saying thus, said, althoughe the king my husband
be of more delicate complexion than you selfe, yet this the
love he beareth me contenteth me so well, that I preferre
the same before all other things. The Gentleman replyed
and said, I praye you, if it were so, you would not pittie me,
for yet of my selfe, that the honest love which resteth in
your heart would yet for you more contentment, if it founde
the like within the king: but God hath well provided other-
wise, for then that you are finding that in him which you de-
sire, you should not see him for your God on earth. I assure
you, said the Queene, the love I beare him is so great, that in
no womanis heart but mine the like is to be founde. I praye
me thus, said the Gentleman, you haue not yet well tried
the

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the love of all mens hearts: for this I dare wel say, there is
one that loveth you, whose love is so importable, that yours
in his respect is not to be compared; and for that he seeketh the
kings love much quenched towards you, his both so much in
create, that if you like thereof, you shall be satisfied for all your
loves pain. The Queene therewith beganne as wel by ante
more gesture, as by words, to make his speech proceeden
from his heart: and calling to minde, that of long time hee
sought to do her service, with such affection, that hee wholie
seemed melancholy, which shee esteemed because of his ban
nise, but as then she steadfastly believed it was for the love of
her, as also the virtue of love, which maketh it selfe felt, not
being done, assured her of that which no man else could tell.
And beholding the Gentleman to be of greater beautie than
the king, perceiving him also cleane cast off by his wife, as she
was of the king, being dyed with despise and ielousie of her
husband, and moved with the love of the Gentleman, with
teares ready to droppe out of her eyes, sighing shee spake and
said, O God! must revenge of wronge work that in me, which
love could never do: Which the Gentleman hearing, answer
ed her and said: Hadam the revenge is easie to him, that in
place of killing his enemy giveth life to a perfect friend: me
thinketh it is now that truth should take from you the foolish
love you beare to him that loveth you not againe; and that
the just and reasonable love should drive that fear out of your
mind, which never can remaine within a virtuous hart. I do
Hadam, let us lay aside the greatnesse of your state, and con
sider our selves to be the man and wife in this worlde, most
mocked and betrayed of those we dearely loved: let us re
venge our selves (good Hadam) not so much to give them
their desert, as to satisfy the love which on my behalfe can no
longer be forborne, unless it cost me my life: and this I think
if your heart be not hardened more then a Diamond, it is im
possible you should not feele some sparke of fire which increa
seth so much more, as I seeke to kindle it, if pity of me, which
for your love I will do, cannot move you to love me, at least,
the

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the loue of your owne selfe should constrain you therunto, who being so perfect, deserue the hearts of all the honest Gentlemen in the world: being dispised and forsaken of him, for whom you haue disdaind all the rest.

The queene hearing these words was therewith in such a trauell, that fearing once by countenance to shew hir troubled minde, and leaning on the Gentlemans arme, went into a Garden adioyning to her chamber, where shee walked long before that she could utter any word, but the gentleman perceiving her to be halfe wonne, being at the Allies end where no man could discover what they did, shewed her by effect the loue he had so long conceald from her, & finding themselves to be of one consent they tooke reuenge in that, whereof the passion seemed intollerable, and there they did agree, that as often as he went into the Countrey, and the King into the Towne, he would not faile to come vnto the Castell to see the Queene, and in that maner deceiuing the deceiuers, they shuld be foure participants of that pleasure which two alone thought onely to enioye: this agreement made, the gentleman returned home, and the Queene into her Chamber, with such contented mindes, that all their former grieue was cleane consumed, and the feare that each of them might haue of the Kings repaite vnto the gentlwoman, was wholly turned to desire, which caused the gentleman oftener to go (then he had vsed) to his country house, being but halfe a mile from thence. Which the King no sooner knew, but he went to see the gentlwoman: and the gentleman when night came went likewise to the Queene, as lieutenant to the King so secretly, as it neuer could be spied: which life continued long, notwithstanding the King, being no common person, could not so well dissemble his loue, but that the world perceiued it full well, whereby all honest men tooke pittie of the gentlemans estate in that some bad companions refrained not to mocke and scoone him, which he perceiued wel, wherewith he was so well content, that he esteemed his honyes as much as the King esteemed his crowne. Who on a time being with

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the Gentleman, could not refrain (seeing a harts head mai-
led by in the Gentlemans house) to smile before her, say-
ing that such a head became the house full well. But the gen-
tleman in courage not inferior to the King, wrote over the
head, saying, I beare these hories as every one may see, but
some do beare them that beleeve it not. And when the king
came thither againe, and found the same writing there, he
asked the gentleman the meaning thereof, who made him
answer: if the kings secret be hidden from the heart, it is no
reason why the harts should be declares to the king: but com-
sent your selfe (my Lord) said he, that all those which beare
hories go not bare head, for that they are thought, that they
brouer no man, and be beareth them lightest, that thinketh
he hath none. The king knew wel by these words that some-
what was discovered, yet neuer suspected the love between
the queene & him: for that the more the queene contented her
selfe with the kings behavior, so much the more she seemed
discontent, whereby long time they lived in that sort, on all
partes, untill by age they were constrained to leave of such

The fourth Nouell.

The rash enterprise of a Gentleman towards a Prin-
cesse of Flanders, with the shame and discredit her
reaped thereby.

There dwelt in the country of Flanders a Ladie
of such state as better there could not be: a widow
of two husbands, by whom she had no children,
whereby during her widowhoode she continued
in her brothers house, of whom she was well beloued, he be-
ing a great Lord and husband to a kings daughter. This
young prince was much given unto his pleasure, louing hunt-
ing parties, and company of Ladies, as youth requireth,
having a wife so troublesome and melancholy, that her hus-
bands

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hands pleasures were no delighted yet at all: wherefore the
said Lord still desired his sisters presence, being a pleasant
Gentlewoman, and the best companion that might be found,
yet very wise and of great honesty. There was in this great
Lords house a Gentleman, whose port, beauty, and good
behaviour surpassed all the rest of his companions. This gen-
tleman perceiving his Masters sister to be a Gentlewoman
addicted unto mirth, and alwayes pleasant, thought to assay,
if mouing her with the choice of an honest friend would not
offend her: which he did, but found contrary answers to yet
outward them: and though her answer was such as became
an honest woman, and so great a Princesse, yet perceiving
him to be so faire, and courteous withall, she easily forgate
his bold attempt, shewing by outward countenance not to be
displeased with him, in speaking vnto her, telling him neuer-
theless, that her desire was not that he should moue her
any more therein: which he promised to observe, thereby not
to loose the honor and contentment he receiued in such spea-
king to her. Where thelesse in time his affection so much in-
creased, that he cleane forgot his former promise, not that he
sought to hazard it by words (as having ouermuch, and sore
against his will tried her wife deniall) but thinking if he could
find her in some place conuenient, that shee being a widow,
young, lusty, and of good complexion, would possibly take pi-
tie of them both. Which to effect, he saide vnto his master,
that not far from his house, he should find good store of game,
and that if it pleased him to goe thither to hunt three or foure
days, in the month of Maie, he should not finde so pleasant
sport elsewhere. Which the Lord, as well for the loue hee
bare vnto the Gentleman, as for the pleasure he usually took
in hunting, agreed vnto: going vnto his house, which
he found, not onely faire, but excellently furnished, as any
Gentlemans within that country, where he lodged the lord
and his lady in one chamber, and in another chamber right
outragaint that he placed her, whome hee loued better than
himselfe. The chamber being so wel hangd with arras, both

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round about an ouer head, and so well matted, that it was impossible once to perceiue a trap doore, vnder her bed that went downe into the chamber where his mother lay, being an olde Gentlewoman, and some what lame, who by reason of her cough, fearing to diseale the Princesse that lay in the chamber ouer her, chaunged chambers with her sonne: and euery night after supper this olde Gentlewoman brought comfets into the Princes chamber, whereat the Gentleman was assistant, who being wel beloued, and ferret with her brother, was not excluded from her, when she made her ready, or when she went to bed, where still he found occasion to augment his love: in such manner, that one night after hee had kept the Princesse waking so long time, that she being sleepe, called him to retire, he went into his chamber, and hauing put on his honest and best person, that he had, with a night robe suitable thereto, it seemed vnto him (in looking on himselfe) that not any man in the world could finde in his heart to refuse his loue: wherefore perswading with himselfe a happy successe, he went to bed, wherein he lay not long, by reason of the great desire & hope he had to obtaine a far more honorable successe, and hauing sent his seruants forth, he went to shut the doore, thinking if he could heare any singing in the princes chamber, and being well assured that euery man was at rest, intent to haue his long desired season to retire, by little and little letting downe the trap, which being so well trimmed and lined with cloth, made not any noise, which sitting downe, by the same way went into the princes chamber, and to her bed (who as then beganne to sleepe) not ouer rememberring, the promise made vnto her, neither yet respecting her high parentage, where without reuerence, or once asking leave he lay downe by her, who sooner felt her selfe betwixt his armes, then once perceiued his comming. But she being strong, pulled on her selfe, and asking what he would, began to such sort to strike, bite, and scratch, that soe he feared he had she should cry out: he was constrained to moue her mouth, which neuertheless he could not doe, so that when

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The gentleman he spared not all means to force her to his will,
 he spared not againe to keep him from it, calling her waiting
 gentlewoman as low as possible she could, that slept within
 her chamber, & an old & veruous lady as any could be found
 who in her smocke came straight into her mistress. But when
 the gentleman perceived himselfe overcome, hee was in so
 great feare to be knowne unto the lady, that in as great haste
 as he could he got down by the way, and so with as much de-
 sire and hope as before he had to be received, with much more
 feare and deepe dispaire he was glad to goe away, and tak-
 ing his glasse in hand, having a candle upon the table, he be-
 held his face by her all bloody, scratched, and bitten, where-
 by the blood ranne downe upon his shirt, in such manner, that
 it appeared more bloody than wrought with gold. Where-
 with he said: O heuty, thou now hast wonne thy iust reward,
 for by thy baite promise, I have enterprised a thing impossi-
 ble, which in lieu of increasing my desire, may be a strong re-
 doubling of my griefe: being well assured, that if she once do
 perceive that contrary to my promise I have enterprised this
 folie, I shall not only lose my honestie, but the daily frequen-
 tation with her, that more than others I usually have had
 that which my glory, cheuty, & good grace hath well deserved.
 I thought not once to come, but to please her long, I should
 not so have ventured, I too force her chaste and princely body,
 but rather by true service, & humble patience attend the time
 when I might be victorious, because that without it al the
 vertues, & forces of man can naught availe. In which sort he
 passed the night in tears, sighs, & griefe impossible to rehearse.
 & in the morning perceiving his face all mangled, he feared to
 be sickly, and not able to indure the light: til al the company
 was gone. The lady that had wonne the victorie, knowing
 that not any man in her brothers house, durst once attempt
 to have an other wife, but only he that had so boldly opened
 his love unto her, perswaded her selfe assuredly it was her
 husse: and having with her Gentlewoman sought round a-
 bout the chamber, to see if they could finde him, in a great

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rage she said, I assure your selfe this is not doone but onelie by the maister of the house; but in the morning I will so deale with my Lord my brother, that with his head hee shall witness my chastitie. Which his furie the gentlewoman perceiving, said: Madam, I much reioyce at the great care you haue vnto your honour, which to augment, you would not spare the life of him, that by the force of loue hath hazarded himselfe, but oftentimes there are such as seeke to increase it, to the contrary do diminish it: wherefore Madam I beseech you not to disclose the truth. And when the Princesse had tolde her howe it happened, the Gentlewoman said vnto her: Your Ladship assureth me that he obtained naught of you but blowes and scratches. Of that I assure you said she, and in such manner, that if he found not a good surgeon, I think the markes will easily appeere. Madam, seeing it is so, said the Gentlewoman, mee thinketh you haue more occasion to praise God, than to think on your reuenge: for you may well suppose that, seeing he had so good courage to enterprise such a thing, than the despight he hath receiued in failing thereof, you cannot giue him any death, that would not be much easer vnto him. If you desire to be reuenged on him, let loue and shame worke which knowe howe to torment him better than your selfe, and doe it for your honour; be ware Madam, I say to fall into the like; for that in lieu to obtaine the greatest pleasure that he could deuise, he hath receiued the most extreme displeasure that any gentleman can haue. And you Madam, thinking to increase your honour, may thereby diminish it: and by making complaint thereof, make that known, that neuer was knowne before: for by him you may be well assured it neuer shalbe revealed: and say my Lorde your brother should do that iustice you require, and thereby this poore gentleman loose his life; yet the common voyce would be, that he had his pleasure of you; and againe men would not sticke to say, It is impossible for a gentleman to enterprise such a thing, vntill the Lord haue giuen him great occasion. Both are both young and faire, living merrily in companies: there

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is not any man in the Court but seeth wel what fauour you
show to him whom you suspect; which will make all men
iudge, that if he hath enterprised such a thing, it was not done
without some fault committed on your behalfe. And your
spoudour, which hitherto hath made you hold your head aloft,
shall by that meanes be brought in question wherefoever it
shal be knowne. The Princesse hearing the good reasons ar-
leaged by her gentlewoman, knew well the false the truth,
and that with good reason shee shoulde bee blamed, conside-
ring the private and good countenance she had alwayes be-
wen vnto the gentleman, asked her what she were best to do,
who answered her, and said: madame, seeing it pleasech you
to heare counsell, perceiuing from what affection it proceed-
eth, methinkes you shoulde be merry at your hart to see, that
the fairest and honestest gentleman that euer I knew, could
neither by loue nor force, make you dishonell your selfe.
Wherewith madame, you ought to thanke God, acknowledge-
ing it not to be doone of your selfe, for that many women,
leading farre more stricter liues then you, haue been ouer-
come and vanquishd by men lesse worthy to be loued then he,
and you ought now more then euer to abstaine from hearing
any discourses of loue, because many there are, which hauing
amoyed the first occasion, yet in the second could not resist.
Remember good madame, that loue is blind, and blindeth
men in such sort, that where men thinke the way to be most
sure, there commonly their feet doe soonest slip. And me-
thinketh madam that you ought neither vnto him nor any o-
ther make it knowne, and though he would remember you
thereof, yet make you as though you knewe it not, thereby to
auoid all dangers that ensue, the one of vaine glory, in re-
spect of the victory you haue had, the other in calling thinges
to mind that are so pleasant to the flesh, that most chaste per-
sons haue much to do to keep themselves from some sparks
thereof, although they shunne them as much as in them lieth.
And further (madam) to the end he shall not thinke that he
hath hazarded a thing which might content or please you: I

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and of this opinion, that by little and little you shal withdrawe
the good countenance you have used towardes him, to the
end he may perceiue how much you dislike of that his follie,
and how great your goodnes is, in contenting your self with
the victorie that God hath giuen you, without requiring fur-
ther reuenge of him. And I beseech God madam (said she)
giue you the grace to continue the honestie hee hath put into
your heart; and knowing that all goodnesse cometh from
him, you may loue and serue him better than euer you did be-
fore. The princeesse therewith determined to follow her Gen-
tlewoman's counsell, and thereupon slept with as quiet and
glad a mind, as the gentleman to the contrary waked in great
distraire. The next day the Lord would ride away, and asked
for his host, who was certified he was so sicke that hee could
not indure to see the light, or speake to any man; whereat the
prince was much abashed, and would haue seene him, but
knowing he tooke his rest, would not disease him, & so with-
out bidding him farewell, departed from his house, taking
both his wife and his sister with him: who vnderstanding the
gentlemans excuse, that would not see the prince, nor yet his
company before they went, was well assured it was he that
so had troubled her, not daring to shew the marks she had set
vpon his face: and although his maister sent often for him,
yet would he not returne vnto the Court, before hee had per-
fectly healed all his wounds, except that onely which loue and
despight had made within his heart. But when he went vnto
the prince, and that he found himselfe before his victorious e-
nemy, he could not chuse but blush; and he that of all others
had bin most aduenturous, was so astonished, that oftentimes
in her presence he was abashed, whereby she assured her selfe
their suspicion to be true, and by little and little estranged her
selfe from him, not so couerly, but he perceiued it well, yet
durst not be seene therein, fearing to haue worse, and kept
his loue within his heart, with the patience of withdrawing
it, which he had well deserved.

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The fift Nouell.

Of a Watermans wife that escaped from two Friers
which would haue forced her, and wrought in such
maner, that their fact was discouered.

At the port of Cullen hard by Rypot, there
was a woman that both night and day did
continually beare men ouer the water, where
it happened two friers to passe ouer in her
boat, and no other company with them: and
for because that it is one of the longest pas-

sages in France, so the ende they might keepe her from
weariennes, they moued her with loue, wherein she answere
ed them as she ought to doe. But they not being wearie of
the way, neither yet by reason of the colones of the water, a-
ny thing aforesaid, nor at the womans deuill once seemed aba-
wed, each of them determined to force her, and if she cried
out, to cast her into the river: but she being as wise and subtle
as they malicious fooles, spake vnto them, and saide: I am
not altogether so vncurtious, as outwardly I shew; but first
I would desire you to graunt me two requests, which done,
you shall well perceiue that I haue better wil to obey you
than you desire. With that the friers swore vnto her by their
good S. Francis, that whatsoeuer she asked of them shee
should bee sure to obtaine, so they might haue their desires.
First then said she, I wil haue you swear and promise me of
your faiths, neuer to make it knowne to any man but your
selues, which they willingly peebled vnto: and then she said
that they should take their pleasures one after an other, for
that said she I should be much ashamed that any man should
looke vpon me while I did it, wherefore saide she, cast lottes
betweene you who shal first begin. They saw her requests so
reasonable, the yonger frier consented that the elder should be
first, and approaching nere an Island she said vnto the yonger,
I pray you here in this Island till I haue caried your fellowe
into an other Island, and if at his returne hee doe like well

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of me, we will leave him here, and goe to an other place with you. Therewith the yonger frier leapt into the Island, saying the returne of his companion, whom the woman brought into another, & being at the shore, making as though she tied the boat, sayde vnto him: Friend, looke what place we were left to go into, wherewith the good father leapt into the Island, to finde convenient place, and he was no sooner on land, but she giuing a thrust with her foote against a tree, made her boate to gine backe into the river, leaving the two holy fathers in the Isles, to whom she cried as loud as ever she could, and sayde: Stay there my masters till God sende his holy Angell to comfort you, for of mee, as this day, you get not any thing that may content you. The two poore friers perceiuing her deceit, kneeled downe vpon the shore, desiring her not to discredite them, promising her, if that shee would cary them to the haven, they would not trouble her: but she rowing on, sayd vnto them: I might well be counted a foole, hauing escaped your hands, to put my selfe into your dangers againe. Which done, returning to y^e village, she called her husband & the officers, desiring them to helpe to take two great deuouring wolues, from whom (by Gods helpe) shee had escaped. They being well accompanied, went thither, for that neither great nor little within the village, but was desirous to bee partaker of that spoyle. The two poore friers perceiuing so great a company comming to them, hid themselves in the Isles (like Adam from the presence of God) shame setting their sinnes before their eyes, and feare of punishment made them so tremble, that in a manner they were halfe dead. But that kept them not from being taken and led to prison, nor without great shouting & crying of the people: some saying, these good fathers preach chastity vnto vs, yet would defile our wives: and her husband sayde, they dare not handle money, and yet will handle our womens thighs, which are more dangerous. Others sayd, they are sepulchres all beautified without, and inwardly filled with dead and rotten diseases. And others cried, and sayde, that
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by their seruices men might perceiue what troes they were. So that you must beleue that all the passages which are found to be in the holy Scriptures against hypocrites, were alledged against those poore prisoners, that by the gardiens meanes were succoured and deliuered: who in great haste came thither to fetch them, assuring the officers, that hee would vse greater iustice against the, then the secular Judge could do. And to satisfie the partie, he protested they would say as many prayers for her as she would desire: whereupon the Judge granted him his request, and deliuered him the prisoners, that were so well schooled by the gardien (being an honest man) that neuer after they passed ouer the riuer without making the signe of the holy crosse, and commending themselves to God.

The sixt Nouell.

The subtiltie of a woman, that found meanes to let her friend escape, when her husband (having but one eie) thought to surprise him.

Here was an olde seruant of the chamber to Charles last duke of Alonson, that had lost one of his eies, and was married to a woman much yonger then himselfe, he being by his master and mistresse as well beloued as any man of his estate could be, whereby he had not meanes to visite his wife so oft as willingly he would, which was the cause that he forgot both honour and conscience, and fell in loue with a yong Gentleman, which in fine was so well known, that at length her husband was aduertised: which he would not beleue, by reason of the great and outward signes of loue his wife did shew vnto him. Neuerthelesse, one day thinking to finde it out, and if he coulde, to be reuenged on him that did him wrong, he faimed to goe into the countrey not farre from thence, where he sayde, he must stay at the least two or three dayes. He being gone, his wife sent for her man, but he had not bene with her aboue halfe an houre, when her husbande

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came againe, and in great haste knocked at the doore, which she perceiuing, tolde her friend, wherewith he was so much in haste, that hee wist himselfe in his mother's belly, and must both her, and loue, that had brought him to that danger: she had him take no thought, saying she would finde means to let him goe without shame or harme, willing him with all speed to make him ready. Some time the husband knocked still at the doore, and called his wife as loud as euer he could, but she counterfeiting as if she knew him not, sayde vnto her seruant, why doe you not rise, and make them leaue their noise, that knocke and call so busily at the doore: is this a time of night to come and knocke at honest mens doores: if my husband were here, he would make you leaue. The husband hearing his wife speake, called her as loud as he could, and sayd, Wife, open the doore: will you let me stand heere, till it be day: And when she saw her friend was ready to goe out, opening the doore, she sayde vnto her husband: Oh husband, how glad am I that you are come: for I had a strange dreame, wherewith I was so well pleased, as possible might be, because I dreame that you had recovered sight of your other eye, and with that embracing and kissing him, she tooke him by the head, and with one of her handes stopping his good eye, asked him, doe you not see better then you were wont to doe: and while he coulde not see at all, she let her friend goe out. Whereof her husband doubted, and sayd: Oh wife, I will neuer watch you againe: for that in thinking to deceiue you, I haue found the finest subtiltie that euer was inuented. God amend you, for it is not in the power of any man liuing, to preuent the malice of a woman, vntill she kill her. But seeing the good entertainment you haue had at my handes, coulde not procure you to amend, it may be, my absence will force you thereunto. Which sayd, he went his way, and left his wife in great discomfort, who by means of his kindemen, friends, crouses, and eares, was of him receiued againe.

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The seventh Nouell.

A marchant of Paris deceiued the mother of his loue,
to couer their fault.



In the cite of Paris there was a marchant
that loued a mayde that dwelt hard by him, so
to say the trueth, better loued of her, then she
of him: for that the shew he made to loue her,
was but to couer a more honourable & haughtie
loue then hers. But she that was content to be deceiued,
loued him so well, that she had wholly forgotten the maner
that women ought to vse, in refusing men. This crasie com-
panion, after he had long time taken paines to goe to her, in
the end made her so fond, that shee ranne after him: which
her mother, being an honest woman, perceiuing, wholly for-
bade her the company of that marchant, which if shee obser-
ued not, she sayd shee would place her in a religious house.
But the daughter that loued the marchant more then shee
feared her mother, made more of him then euer she did: and
one day being in a chamber alone, the marchant went in, who
finding place conuenient, spake as secretly vnto her as possi-
bly he might, but a certeine maide seeing him going in, went
and tolde her mother, who in great cholour ranne thither: and
when her daughter heard her come, shee wept vnto the mar-
chant, and sayd, Alas my loue, now the loue I beare vnto
you, shalbe dearely bought, here comes my mother who will
surely knowe which she alwayes feared. The marchant that
therewith was not abashed, left her presently, and went to meet
her mother, and opening his armes, embraced her as hard as
euer he cou'd, and with the same fury wherewith he vled the
daughter, he thiew the poore olde woman vpon a bed, who
found that maner of entertainment to be so strange, that she
knew not what to do, but onely to say, what will you haue?
what are you madde? but for all that he left not off to handle
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her in such sort as if she had bene the fairest mayde in all the world: and had it not bene that shee cried so loud, that both her men and mayds came in to helpe, she had past the same way which she so much feared for her daughter. Wherefore by maine strength they tooke the poore olde woman out of the marchants armes, without once knowing, nor yet could euer know, the cause wherefore he vsed her so. Meane time her daughter got into another house, wherein there was a wedding, which time the marchant and shee did often call to minde, and laughed thereat, but to the olde wifes cost, that neuer could perceiue it.

The eight Nouell.

A certeine man hauing lien with his wife, thinking she had bene his mayde, sent his companion thither, that made him cuckolde, his wife not knowing thereof.

In the countie of Aller, there was a man called Boznet, that had married an honest woman, whose credit and reputation he loued, as all the husbands that are heere in place (as I thinke) do, and although he desired his wife shoulde be faithfull vnto him, yet hee woulde not that the lawe (in that case) shoulde be equall to them both: for that hee became a morous of his mayde, in which exchange he feared nothing, but that diuersitie of meats would not please him. He had a neighbour, of one condition, named Sandras, both a Drum maker and a Taploz, betweene whom there was so great familiaritie, that their wines onely excepted, their goods were in a manner common: whereupon hee shewed his friend the enterpryse he meant to make vpon his mayde, who not onely liked it well, but to his power holpe to bring it to passe, hoping to haue some share therein. The mayde that would not consent thereto, perceiving her selfe so hardly followed,

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shewed to her mistresse, desiring her to giue her leaue to goe
vnto her friends, saying she could not liue in that sort. The
mistresse that loued her husband well, whom she did suspect,
being very glad to haue occasion thereby iustly to charge
hinny, sayd vnto her mayde, content your selfe, and holde
my husband with faire words, and in the end appoint him to
lie with you, but faile not at any hand to tell me certainly the
night when the same shall be, and take heed that no man
knowes it. The mayde did as her mistresse had commanded,
which pleased her master so well, that hee went to tell his
friend, who desired him, that seeing he had bene a partner in
making the match, he might likewise haue some part of that
he left. The promise made, and the time come, the master
went to bed (as he thought) with his maid, but she that had as
then renounced the authoritie of commaunding, for the plea-
sure to be a seruant, had layde her selfe in the maydes bed, and
receiued her husband therein, not as a wife, but rather seem-
ed a bashful mayde, and in such maner, that her husband could
never perceiue it. I cannot tell you which of them was best
pleased, whether he in thinking to deceiue his wife, or she to
deceiue her husband: but when he had bene with her, not so
long as pleased him, but as he found himselfe able to beare
it out, being not altogether so stout a warriour, as other wise
he had bene, he rose and went out of the house, where finding
his companion stronger and ponger then himselfe, tolde him
that he had found the best gown that euer he saw. You know
sayd his companion, what you promised me. So then quick-
ly, sayd the master, lest she should rise, or that my wife should
call her for some businesse. His companion went thither, and
found the same mayde there which the husband had mistaken,
who thinking him to be her husband, refused not whatsoeuer
he would aske: I meane by asking, taking, for he durst not
speake. And there he staid longer then the husband did be-
fore: whereat the woman wondred, for she was not wont to
haue such kinde of nights: neuerthelesse, shee was content,
comforting herselfe with the speeches which in the morning

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she meant to be vnto him, and with the mockerie. About
breake of day the man rose vp, and in departing from her, be-
ing disposed to play, by chance hee tooke a ring from off her
finger, which ring her husband gaue her when they married:
(a thing which the women of that countrey do keepe in great
solemnitie, and honour much that woman which keepeth her
ring vntill she dies: and to the contrary, if she chance to lose
it, she is discredited, as hauing giuen her faith vnto another
man besides her husband) shee was content that he should
take it, thinking that it would serue for a certaine token of his
late deceit. When the companion returned againe, he asked
him, what he had done, and how he liked the match: he tolde
him he was of his opinion, and that if he had not feared day,
he had not come as yet, wherewith as softly as they could
they went to bed. In the morning, as he made him ready,
the husband perceiued the ring which his companion ware
vpon his finger, in all points like to that which he had giuen
his wife when they were married; wherewith hee asked his
companion of whom he had it: but when he vnderstood he had
snatcht it from the mayd, he was abasht, and began to leane
his head against the wal, and said: Good God, haue I made
my selfe cuckolde, my wife not knowing it: his companion
to comfort him, spake & sayd, It may be, your wife when she
went to bed, gaue your mayde the ring to keepe. With that
the husband went into the house, where he found his wife, fai-
rer, finer, and merrier then vsually she had beene, as she that
much reioyced to haue saued the conscience of her mayd, and
tried her husband euen to the full, with no more losse then
watching for a night. The husband perceiuing her to seem so
pleasant, sayd within himselfe: If she knew my fortune, she
would not looke so merrily vpon me: and speaking vnto her
of diuers things, he tooke her by the hand, and perceiuing
she had not the ring, which she neuer put off her finger, he be-
came so much abasht, that with a trembling voice, he asked
her and sayd, What haue you done with your ring? but she
that was full glad that he began to moue that which she her
selfe

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selfe desired to utter, sayd vnto him: O the most wicked man that euer liued on the earth, from whome thinke you, you tooke the ring: you thought you tooke it from my mayd, for whose sake you haue spent double so much more of your goodnesse, then euer you did for mee: for the first time that you came to me, I esteemed you so amorous of her, that more you could not be, but after you went out, and then came in againe, you seemed to be a deuil, and not a man: O unhappy wretch, thinke with your selfe what blindness hath bewitched you, so much so vse my company whereof you haue receiued the pleasure, and yet esteemed it not. It is not then the beautie or person of your mayd that made you finde such pleasure at this time, but it is sinne and filth that burneth in your heart, and makes your head so madde, that you haue taken a goate at that time for a wench. Now husband, it is time to mend your life, and content your selfe with me, knowing me to be your owne, and an honest woman, and thinke what you haue done, supposing me to be your chamber mayd: that I haue done was onely to withdraw from you sinne, to the end that in our age, we both may liue in loue, with quiet consciences. For if you meane to liue as you haue done, I haue rather separate my selfe, then dayly to beholde the destruction of your soule, your body, and your goods before my face. But if you will confesse your fault, and purpose now to liue in godly sort, obeying him, I will forget all former faults, as I beseech the Lord to pardon my ingratitude, in not louing him as I ought. If euer man was abashed, and in despair, surely it was this man, perceiuing his wife so faire, so chaste and honest, to haue bene left by him, for one that loued him not, and which is worse, to haue bene so accursed, to haue made her do amisse, not knowing it, and made another partaker of that pleasure that onely was for him, whereby he made himselfe to weare the hornes, to his perpetuall shame. But perceiuing his wife so moued, touching the loue he bare vnto the mayde, was well aduised not to disclose the wicked touch he had playd with her, but asking her forgiveness, with promise

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to forgoe his wicked life, he gaue her the ring againe, which he had taken from the other man, whome he besought not to disclose the fact. But diuers thinges are spoken secretly that after come to light: for not long time after the truth thereof was knowne, and he was called cuckold, without disgrace to her.

The ninth Nouell.

The pitifull death of an amorous Gentleman, by ha-
ving ouer late receiued comfort from the Gentle wo-
man whom he loued.

Betweene Dauphinois and Prouance there
was a Gentleman much richer in vertue, beau-
tie, and honestie, than of worldly goods, that ex-
tremely loued a Gentlewoman, whose name
I will not now rehearse, for her kindred sake, that
are proceeded of great and rich houses; but assure your selues
the thing is most true: and because hee was not of the like
house, he durst not discover his affection, for that the extreme
loue he bare vnto her was so great and so perfect, that he had
rather die than to desire any thing that might haue bene to
her dishonour; and perceiuing himselfe to be of so meane pa-
rentage in respect of hers, was wholly out of hope to marrie
her. Wherefore his loue was grounden vpon no other point,
than onelie to loue her with all his power, as perfectly as he
could: which he so long continued, that in the end he hadde
some inkling thereof; and perceiuing the loue hee bare vnto
her, so full of vertue and good speeches, he esteemed her selfe
most happy to be beloued of one that was so vertuous, and
gaue him thereupon so good countenances, that hee which
sought no other thing, was therewith well pleased. But ma-
lice the enemy of all quietnes, could not indure this honest
and happy life, for that certaine men saide vnto the mother
of the gentlewoman, that they were much abashed what that
gentleman made so much within her house, and that it was
thought

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thought her daughters beautie was the onely cause, with
whome he was often seene to speake. The mother which no-
thing doubted of the gentlemans honest behauiour, whereof
she assured herselfe, as much as of any of her owne children,
was very sorie to heare that it was taken in euil part, inso-
much that in the ende (fearing some slander by malicious
heades might thereby arise) desired him for a time not to fre-
quent her house, as vsually hee had doone: a thing which hee
found very hard to be digested, knowing that the honest spee-
ches hee had vsed to her daughter deserued no such cause of
absence. Neuerthelesse, to the end he might cease euill spee-
ches, he forbore for so long time, and at last returned thi-
ther againe, as he had done before, whose absence had not
diminished his goodwill: But being in the house, hee under-
stoode they meant to marry the Gentlewoman with a gentle-
man, who in his opinion was not so rich, that hee should doe
him such wrong, to haue his loue, no more than he himselfe.
And thereupon beganne to take heart, and to employ his
friends to speake for him, thinking that if the choise were put
vnto the gentlewoman, she would preferre him before the o-
ther: neuerthelesse, the mother of the gentlewoman and her
friends, because the other was richer, chose him, whereat the
gentleman was so much displeased, that knowing his friends
lost as much contentment as himselfe, by little and little with-
out other sicknes, beganne to consume, and in short space
was changed, and that in such sort, that it seemed hee couered
the beauty of his face, with the maske of death, whereunto
from hower to hower he still approached: yet could he not re-
fraine, but sometimes went to speake with her whom he so
deerely loued. But in the ende when strength failed him, he
was constrained to keepe his bed, whereof he would not once
aduertise her whome he loued, fearing to procure her cause
of grieffe, and so suffering himselfe to fall into despaire, he
lost both his eating, drinking and his naturall rest, in somuch
that it was impossible to know him by reason of his leanenes
and strange countenance. By chance a friend of his aduer-

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tised the mother, of his loue who being very charitable, and on the other side loued the Gentleman so well, as that if all the friends had bene of her and her daughters opinion, they had preferred his honest behaviour befoze all the riches of the other Gentleman: but the fathers kindred would not consent thereto. Shee with her daughter went to visit him, whome she found rather dead then living, and knowing his death to approach, had confessed himselfe, and receiued the holy sacrament, thinking presently to die and neuer to see any man againe: but being as it were within two fingers breadth neere to death, seeing her that was his life and resurrection, felt himselfe so strong that he cast himselfe vpon a bed saying vnto the lady, what occasion hath brought you hither. Madame to come and visit him that hath his foote already in the graue, and of whose death you are the cause: what (said the Lady) may it be possible that he whom we loue so well, should re- ceauie his death by our meanes: I pray you shew vs for what cause you vs this speech: Madame said he, although as much as in me lay, I haue dissembled the loue I beare vnto the Gentlewoman your daughter, so it is that my friends speaking of her marriage & mine together, haue spoken more then willingly I would, considering the mischief that is fallen vpon me, to loose the hope, not for my particular pleasure, but because I know full well shee shall not be so well used, nor so well beloved as shee should haue bene with me. The good I perceiue shee loseth of the best and most affectionat seruant and friend that shee hath in this world, procureth me more grief, then the losse of this my life, which for her only I would preserve, but seeing it can serue her to no end, in losing it, it is to me great profit. The mother and the daughter hearing his discourse, sought by all meanes to comfort him. The mother saying vnto him, be of good courage and I promise you of my faith, that if God send you your health, my daughter shall neuer haue other husband then your selfe, and here shee is in presence, whom I command to giue her faith vnto you, The daughter weeping, laboured to do that which

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her mother promised she should: but he knowing that when he should be whole, he should not haue his loue, and that the good speech she vttered vnto him, was onely but to proue if that she could reuiue him. Once againe he said vnto her, that if those words had bene spoken vnto him three months before, he had bene the healthfullest and the happiest Gentleman in France, but the reliefe came now so late, that it could not be beleebed, nor yet hoped, and when he sawe they inforced themselves to make him to beleue it, he said vnto them: Well seeing I perceiue you promise me that good which neuer wil come to passe, although you desire it should, for the weaknes wherein I am, I craue of you, a thing much lesse then that, which hitherto I neuer was so bold for to require: with that, both of them sware to grant it bidding him freely speake. I beseech you then said he, that you will giue her into my armes, whom you doe promise me shall bee my wife, and command her to imbrace and kisse me. The daughter that neuer had vled any such entertainement, thought to denie it him: but her mother commanded her expressely, perceiuing there was no more liuely feeling in him, then in a dead man. Therewith the daughter by her mothers commandement went to the sick mans bed, and said vnto him, my good friend, I pray you comfort your selfe. The poore languishing Gentleman as well as he could in his extreame weakenes, stretched forth his armes, nothing but skinne and bones, and with all the strength of his body imbraced the cause of that his death, and kissing hir with his pale and cold lippes, held her as long as possible he could, and then saide vnto her, the loue I haue borne vnto you hath bene so great and honest, that neuer (marriage set apart) did I desire other fauour at your hands, then I haue nowe: for want whereof, and therewith I will most gladly peeld my spirit vnto God, who is perfect loue and charity, and knoweth the greatnes of my loue, and my honest desire beseeching him (hauing my whole delight betweene mine armes) to receiue my spirit in his hands & saying so, took her again into his armes so be-

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mently, that the weake heart beeing not able to sustaine that force, was wholy forsaken of all his liuely spirits, for that the ioy made it so to reioice, that the soule abandoning his place, departed from the body, and although the poore body continued without life, and by that meanes coulde no more holde her griefe, neuertheless the loue, which the Gentlewoman had alwaies hidden shewed it selfe so much at that time, that the mother and her seruants had much adoe to seperate their bodies. But by force pulled the liuing almost dead from the dead whom they caused honourably to be buried; but the greatest triumph vsed at his obsequie was, the teares, sorowes and cries of the poore Gentlewoman, which shewed so much the more after his death, as shee dissembled them during his life, in a maner satisfying the wrong that shee had done vnto him, and since that time, (as I haue heard) what husband soeuer shee had giuen her, shee was neuer merry at her heart.

The tenth Nouell.

The incontinencie of a Duke together with his impudencie to attaine his desire, with the iust punishment of his euill intent.

ong since there was a Duke of Florence, that had married the ladie Margaret bastard daughter to the emperour Charles the first: and because as yet she was so yong, that hee might not lie with her, staying till shee came to yeares, he vled her very kindly, for that to spare her he was amorous of certaine Ladies in the cittie, which by night he went to visite, while his wife slept. Among others he loued a very faire, wise, and honest Gentlewoman, sister to a Gentleman, of whome the Duke made great account, and to whom he gaue so great authoritie in his house, that his word was as much feared and obeyed as if he had bin the

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the Duke himselfe: and there was no secret in his hart, that he made not knowne to him, in such sort that he might well be termed a second Duke. The Duke perceiuing his sister to be so honest, that by no meanes hee could declare his loue vnto her; after he had sought all meanes he could, he went to the Gentleman, whome he loued so well, and said vnto him: If there were any thing in this world (my good friend saide he) that I would refuse to do for you, I should feare to shew you my desire, and much more to intreate you to be assistant vnto me. But I beare such loue vnto you, as that if I had either wife, mother, or daughter, that might be a meanes to saue your life, I would rather imploy them therein, than let you die for want of them. And I esteeme the loue you beare to me, to be no lesse; and in such sort, that if I my selfe which am your maister, do beare you such affection, you can not at the least beare lesse to me. Therefore I meane to vtter a secret vnto you, the secrecie whereof brings mee in such a case as you now see, whereof I neuer hope redresse, but onelie by death, or by the seruice which in this respect you now may do vnto me. The Gentleman hearing his maisters reasons, and perceiuing his face, vnfainedly wet with teares, took such pite on him, that he saide vnto him: My Lord, at the good and honour I haue proceeded from you, you may speake to me, as to your friend, being wel assured, that the thing which is in my power, is already in your handes. With that the Duke beganne to declare vnto him the loue he bare vnto his sister, which was so great and strong, as that if by his means he could not obtaine the same, he was not able to liue long, as knowing well that in regard of her, neither prayers nor presents would ought preuaile, wherefore he desired him, that if he loued his life, as much as he his, he would finde meanes to win him that fauour, which without him he neuer hoped for. The brother that loued his sister, and the honour of his house, more then the Dukes pleasure, sought by certaine reasons to dissuade him, beseeching him to imploy him in any other thing rather than that, which might be so great

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a dispight vnto him, as to purchase the dishonour of his owne blood, saying that his heart and honour could not agree to do him seruice therein. The Duke inflamed with an insupportable rage, put his finger in his mouth, biting his nalle, and answered him in great fury, Well seeing I finde no friendship in you, I know what I must do. The gentleman knowing the cruelty of his master, was in great feare, and said vnto him: My lord, seeing it is your pleasure, I will speake vnto her, and tell you what she saith. The Duke answered, going from him, if you loue my life, I will likewise loue yours. The Gentleman vnderstoode well what that word meant, and was a day or two before he saw the Duke againe, thinking what he had to doe: on the one side he set before his eyes the duep hee ought vnto his master, with the riches and honours that by his meanes hee had receiued, on the other side, the honour of his house, the honestie and chastitie of his sister, whom he knew would neuer consent to so dishonest an action, if by subtiltie she were not deceiued, or by force compelled thereunto: a thing which he would finde very strange, seeing that thereby both he and his should be defamed. Wherefore he determined, that he had rather die, then commit so wicked a fact against his sister, being one of the honestest women in all Italie, and that he would rather deliuer his countrey of such a tyrant, then by force to bring so great a shame vpon his owne house: for that he was assured, that without the Dukes death, his life, nor yet his friends could be in safetie: wherfore without speaking to his sister, he determined by one meanes to saue his owne life, and reuenge her shame, at the end of two dayes hee went vnto the Duke, and sayd vnto him, that he had so well practised with his sister (not without great paine) that in the end she consented to his wil, vpon condition he should keepe the thing so secret, that none but her brother should know thereof. The Duke that desired those newes, beleued him, and embracing the messenger, promised him whatsoeuer he would desire, desiring him to bring the same to passe with as much speed as might.

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might be : whereupon they did appoint the day. If the Duke was glad , you need not doubt : and when he knew the night (hee so much desired) to approach, wherein hee hoped to obtaine the victorie of her, to whom he esteemed inuincible, he withdrew himselfe with the Gentleman onely, not forgetting to put on his coife and perfumed shirt, the best that could be found. And when all were gone to rest, hee went with the Gentleman vnto his house, where he entred into a very pleasant chamber : there the Gentleman pulled off his night gowne, and layd him in his bed, saying vnto him, I will goe fetch her, that will not enter into this chamber without blushing, but I hope before morning, she will be assured of you : with that hee left the Duke, and went into his chamber, where he found but one of his men, to whom he says : Darest thou be so hardy to follow me vnto a place, where I will reuenge my selfe of the greatest enemy I haue in all y world. His man ignorant what he would do, says : Sir, that I will, were it the Duke himselfe. With that the Gentleman ledde him so suddenly that he had no other weapon then a poyard at his backe. When the Duke heard him come againe, thinking he brought her with him whom he loued so well, he opened the curtaines to see and receiue her, he had so long attended, but instead of seeing her by whom he hoped the preservation of his life, he beheld his owne headlong falling into death, being a naked sword which the gentelman had drawn, wherewith he strake the Duke being in his shirt, who being destitute of armes, but not of hart, set himselfe vpright within the bed and tooke the Gentleman by the middle, saying vnto him, Is this the promise you keepe? and seeing he had no other weapon but his teeth and nailes, he bit the Gentleman by the thumb, & by strength of armes defended himselfe so well, that both of them fell vpon the bed : the Gentleman being not well assured, called his seruant, who finding the Duke and his Maister so hardly elapsed together, that hee knewe not which to chuse, drew them both by the feet into the middle of the chamber, and with his poyard assailed to

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cut the Dukes throte, who defended himselfe untill the losse of his blood made him so weak that he could doe no more. Then the Gentleman and his seruant laide him in his bedde, where with the stabs of a dagger they made an end of killing him, and drawing their curten they went their waies, and shut the dead body within the chamber, and when he founde himselfe victorious of his enemy, by whose death he hoped to see the common wealth at liberty, though his cruelty should yet be imperfect, if he doe not as much to save or live of those that were the Dukes neere kinsemen. And to bring the same to passe, he said unto his servant that he would go and fetch them one after the other, to deale with them as he had done with the Duke: but his servant being neither strong nor bold, said unto him, me thinketh sir, you have done enough at this time, and that you shall doe better in thinking howe to save your owne life, then seeke to take it from others, for if wee stay so long to kill each of them, as we doe about the Duke, the day will sooner discover our enterpryse, then wee shall bring it to an end, although we found our enemies without defence, the Gentleman, whose wicked conscience made him fearefull beleue his servant, & taking him with him, went unto the Bishop that had charge of opening the gates of the City, and to command the posts and said unto him, I have this night received news that a brother of mine is at the point of death, so that I have desired licence of the Duke to go unto him, who hath granted it me, wherefore I pray you command the posts to giue me two good horses, and will the porter to open me the gates. The Bishop that esteemed his request no lesse then the commandement of the Duke his master, gaue him presently a billet, by vertue whereof the gate was opened unto him, and the horses delivered according to his desire, and instead of going to see his brother, he went to Venice, where hee caused the byrings he had received by the Duke to be healed, and from thence went into Turquie. In the morning the Dukes seruants seeing him so long before he came, suspected he was gone to see some Gentlewoman, but

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but perceiving him to flay, began on all sides to seeke him out. The poore Dutches that began to loue him wel, knowing he could not be found, was in great feare: but when the Gentleman he loued so well, could no more be found then he, they went to seeke him at his house, & finding blood at his chamber doze, entered into the chamber, but no man could tel them newes, and following the teares of the blood, the Dukes poore seruants came to the chamber wherin he was, which they found lockt, but they soone brake downe the doze: and perceiving the place all full of blood, they drew the curtin and there found the poore body within the bed, sleeping his long sleepe. You may well thinke what sorowe his poore seruants made, that bare the body to his pallace, whither the Bishop came, who told them how the Gentleman was departed by night in great haste vnder pretence to go and see his mother: wherefore it was evidently found that it was he that had done the murther. And it was proued that his poore sister, had neuer heard thereof, who although shee was abasht at that had happened, yet she loued her brother the more, that had deliuered her from so cruell a Prince, enemy of her chastity, not hauing for the safegard thereof, feared to hazard his own life: and continued more and more her honest and vertuous life, in such sort, that although shee was but poore, because their house and goods was all confiscate, yet shee and her sister found as rich husbands as any were in Italie, and euer since haue liued in great reputation.

The eleuenth Nouell.

The subtilty of an amorous gentleman, that vnder the fauour and countenance of a good friend, obtained of a Gentlewoman of Millan the fruits of his forepassed labours.

In the dutchie of Millan at such time as the great master of Chaumont was gouernor: there was a Gentleman named the Lord of Bonduet, who after for his vertues, was Admirall of France. Hee

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being at Milan welbeloued of the great Master and of all others, for the vertues that were in him, bled much to banquet where the Ladies and Gentlemen did resort, of whom he was better esteemed then euer any French man before him had bene, as well for his beuty, good grace, and pleasaunt speech, as for the report giuen of him, to be one of the valiantest and stoutest warriors that euer was in his time. Upon a day being in a maske in throuweeke, he led one of the bravest and fairest Gentlewomen in all the Citty to dance with him, and when the hautboies paused, he failed not to sollicite her with loue, which he knew better then others how to doe. But she that was not behinde in answering him, would so dauntly cast her fanne before her face and say him, assuring him that she loued not, nor euer would loue any but only her husband, wishing him not to hope for any other at her hands. This answer made not the Gentleman to forbear, but earnestly pursued her, untill lent: but for a resolution he founde her firme and constant in determination, neither to loue him nor any other, which hee could not beleue, considering the hard countenance of her husband and her great beauty: wherefore seeing she so much dissembled, he determined likewise to use deceit. And from that time forwarde left off his suite, and enquired so well of her life, that hee found shee loued a very wise and honest Gentleman of Italie: the said Lord of Boniuert by little and little acquainted himselfe with the said Gentleman, in such crafty and subtile manner that he neuer could perceiue, but he loued him so well, that after his Lady, he was the man that in the world he most loued. The Lord of Boniuert to find the secret of his heart, feined to shew him his, and that he loued a Gentlewoman whom hee neuer thought vpon, desiring him to keepe his secret, and besought him that their hearts and mindes might be all one. The poore Gentleman to shewe him the like fauour tolde him at large of his loue he bare vnto the Gentlewoman, whereof Boniuert sought to be reuenged, and once a day they met in some place or other to shewe their good fortunes that day past, which

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whiche the one tolde in good cineth, the other dissembling. And the gentleman confessed that he had loued that gentlewoman for the space of thre yeeres together, without ener obtaining any other thing at her hands, than only faire speeches, with assurance to be beloued of her. The said Boniuet counselled him the best way hee coulde, to finde the meanes to bring his purpose to passe, whereby he found himselfe so well eased, that in fewe daies after hee obtained him his desire: and there rested nothing but to finde the meanes to recouer the same, which by the lorde Boniuets meanes was soon founde out.

One day before supper the Gentleman saide vnto him. Sir I am more beholding to you than to al the men in the world, for that by your good counsel I hope this night to reape that I haue so manye yeeres laboured to obtaine. I pray thee saide Boniuet shew me the manner of the enterpryse, to see if there be deceit or hazard therein, that I may aide and serue thee as a friend. The Gentleman tolde him how he meant to leane the street doore open, vnder pretence of a certain disease that one of her brethren had, for whome at all times of the night they were forced to fetch some thing or other: and that hee might assuredly enter into the Court: but that hee was to take heede hee went not by the great staires, but rather, a small paire of staires on the right hand, and so enter into the first gallery, where hee should finde that all the doores of the chambers of her father and brother in lawe shd open, and that he should chuse the third doore nearest vnto the saide staires, and that if in thrusting it softly from him he found it shut, hee should not stay, being assured that her husband was come, who neuerthelesse was not to retorne in two dayes, and that if he found it open, he should go in softly, and then shut it to him, knowing thereby not any body to be therein, but shee herselfe; and that above all, he should not forget to make shoes of felt, fearing to make any noise, and that he should likewise be sure not to come before two hours after midnight, because her brethren that loued play, neuer vsed to goe to bed before one of the clocke at night: the saide Boniuet answered him

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and said: O my friend, God be thy speede, I beseech him to keepe them from inuoluntance, if my company may pleasure thee, I will not spare any thing that is in my power. The Gentleman thanked him most heartily, and tolde him that in such an enterpryse he could not be too sure, and went presently to take order for the same. The L. of Bonivet for his part slept not, and perceiving it time to bee reuenged on his cruell Dame, withdrew himselfe in good time vnto his lodging, and caused his heere to be cut of the same length and breadth that the Gentleman wore his heere, and cut his haire likewise, so the end that by touching, their difference might not be knowne: he forgot not his felt shoes, and the rest of his apparell like vnto the Gentlewoman: and because hee was much beloued of the father in lawe to that Gentlewoman, was not afraide to go thither in good time, thinking that if he were perceiued, he would go straight vnto the old mans chamber, with whom he had some busines to do; and about midnight entered into the gentlewomans house, where he found diners of the house stirring, but yet hee passed and was not knowne, and so entered into the gallery; and touching the two first doores, he found them shut, but not the third, which he thrust softly from him, and being in the chamber, he shutt the doore to him, and perceiued all the chamber to be hangd with white linnen cloth, the floore and the rooffe in like sort, and a bed of linnen very fine, so well wrought with white worke as possible might be, and the Gentlewoman alone within the bedde in her smocke and a wakercoat all set with pearles and stones, which he perceiued thorow the curtaines, not being scene of her, for there stood a great candle of white waxe vpon the table, that made her chamber seeme as light as day: but fearing to be knowne by her, he put it out: that done, he put off his clothes vnto his shirt, and layed himselfe downe by her, she thinking it had bene the Gentleman that had loued her so long, receiued him in as friendly manner as she could: but he that knew it was done in the name of another man, would not speake a word, but thought onely to ex-

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execute his reuenge, which was to bereaue her, both of honour and chastitie, without giuing her thanks: but against his will and determination, the Gentlewoman contented herselfe so well with that reuenge, that she thought she had recompensed him well for his paines, vntill an houre after midnight, that it was time to bid her farewell, and then as fastly as he could, he asked her if she were as well content with him as he with her: she thinking it had bene her friend, sayde that she was not ouely content, but marueiled at his great loue, that had made him stay an whole houre from speaking vnto her: with that he began to laugh, saying vnto her, Tellest Gentlewoman, will you refuse me another time, as til now you haue pleased to doe? She that knew him by his speech and laughter, for shame was almost desperate, and more then a thousand times called him villaine, traitour, and cosinier, thinking to rise out of the bed, to finde a knife to kill herselfe, seeing she had bene so accursed, to lose her honour, for a man she loued not, and that to be reneged on her, might make it knowne to all the world. But he held her in his armes, and by good and faire speeches, assured her to loue her more then him she loued, and that he would be secret, in such sort that she should neuer heare it. Which the poore soole beleued: and vnderstanding his inuention, and the paines that he had taken for to win her, sware she would loue him better then the other, that could not keepe his secrets: and sayd that she then knewe the contrary of the false report giuen of French men, for they were wiser, more perceuaunt, and discreet then the Italians: wherefore from thenceforward she would desist from her opinion touching his countrey men, to content her minde with him. But she desired him very earnestly, that for a time he would not be in place, or banket where she might come, but onely in a maske, because she knew full well she should be so ashamed, that her countenance would make it knowne to all the world. He promised her it should be so, and prayed her that when her friend came about two of the clocke, that shee would bid him welcome, and that after by little and little she might

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might cast him off. Whereof she made so great difficulty, that but onely for the loue she bare vnto him, she would haue granted it. Neuerthelesse in bidding him aue, he contented her so well, that she would willingly haue had him stay longer. After he was vp and made him ready, he went out of the chamber, and left the doore as he had found it: and because it was almost two of the clocke after midnight, and that hee feared to meet the Gentleman in the way, he staid at the top of the staires, where presently after he saw him passe by, and enter into the chamber. Which done hee went straight vnto his lodging, to rest him of his trauailes, in such sort, that at nine of the clocke in the morning they found him in his bed. When he was rising, the Gentleman came in, that failed not to shew him his fortune, not so good as he hoped it should haue bene: for sayd he, when I entered into the chamber, I found her vp, and set in her mantle, with a fit of an ague vpon her, her pulles beating sore, her face all in a colour and sweating, her disease beginning to come vpon her, in such manner, that she desired me presently to depart, for that fearing some inconuenience, she durst not call her women, whereby she was so ill at ease, that she had more cause to thinke on death, then vpon loue, and rather to heare speaking of God then of Cupid, being very sorry for the hazzard wherein I had put my selfe for her, seeing she had not the meanes in this world to render mee the like, but she hoped to doe it in the world to come. Whereat I was so abashed, that my fier and joy were turned into ise and sadness, and so I presently departed: and in the morning about breake of day I sent to know how shee did, and newes were returned me of a certaine that shee was very sicke: and saying so, he wept so bitterly, that it seemed he would peele his spirit with teares. Boniuet that had as much desire to laugh as the other to weepe, comforted him the best he could: saying vnto him, that things of long continuance haue alwaies a hard beginning, and that loue gaue him a delay to cause him to feele a enioying thereof to bee more pleasant, and therewith they departed from each other.

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The Gentlewoman for certayne daies after kept her bedde,
and recouering her health, gaue her first seruant his farewell,
grounding it vpon the feare she had of death, and remorse of
conscience, and contented her selfe with the looke of Bonny,
whereof she amply indured (according to the custome) as
the beauty of the flowers in the field.

The twelfth Nouell.

Of a Gentlewoman in the Kings court, that perceiuing
her selfe to be disdained of her husband, that loued
other women. Shee reuenged her selfe by the like
meanes.

In the Court of King Francis, the first, there
was a Gentleman whose name I know full
well, but I wil not name it, he was but poore,
as hauing but 500. frankes yearely rent, to
live on, but so much esteemed of by the King,
for the vertues wherewith he was indowed, that he married
so rich a wife, as that a great Lorde would haue contented
himselfe with her, and because shee was very young, he deli-
uered out of the greatest Ladies in the court to keepe her in her
house, which she willingly did. This Gentleman was so
honest and so full of good grace, that all the Ladies in the
court made great account of him, and one among the rest
the King loued, yet not so faire nor so young as his owne,
and for the great loue he bare vnto her he made so small ac-
count of his wife, that hardly once a yeare he lay with her,
and which was more importable for her, was, that he neuer
spake vnto her, nor shewed any signes of loue: and although
he enioyed her goods, yet he gaue her so small a portion, that
hardly was she apparellled as her estate required, neither as
she desired, whereby the Lady with whom she was, often-
times reproveth the Gentleman, saying vnto him: your wife
is faire, rich and of a good house, and you esteeme not of her.

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which her husband and young ones both loved her dearly,
but I feare that when she shall perceive her selfe to be faire
and of good stature, that some one that loneth you not, fearing
brump (which to you is not esteemed) will seek to overcome
her, that in despite she will not have, which being by you well
bled she durst not once conceive. The Gentleman that had
set his heart in another place, mocked her, and for all that
ceased not to follow his old course: but two or three yeares
being past over, his wife began to bee one of the fairest wo-
men in all France, and so faire, that she had the whole repose
in the court not to have her match: and the more she per-
ceived and felt her selfe worthy to be beloved, the more it grie-
ued her to see her husband, that made no account of her, in
such sort, that she tooke so great displeasure thereat, that
without the comfort of her mistress she was in a manner de-
perate and having sought all meanes she could to winne her
husbands love, though with her selfe it was impossible, but
that she should love her considering the great love she bare
to him, unless his minde were called otherwise, which she
so subtilly went about to know, that at length she found the
trick, and that he every night was so busied elsewhere, that he
forgot both his conscience and his wife, and after she was as-
sured of the life he led, she was in malice, that she would
weare nothing but blacke, nor haue any places where mirth
or good cheer was used. Which her mistress perceiving, did
what she could to winne her from this sad conceit, but it
was impossible, and although her husband was advertised
thereof, yet was he readier to mocke her, then to take any com-
fort therein. You know Gentlewoman that griefe overcom-
meth love, and that griefe by love is overcome. All therefore it
happened that a great Lorde neere kinsman unto the mistress
of the Gentlewoman and that same afternoon her, understan-
ding the strange manner of the Gentlewoman and husband, had
so great pittie on her, that he thought to try if he could com-
fort her: and speaking with her found her so faire and beauti-
ous, that he had more desire to win her favour, then to speake

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unto her of her husband: vntlesse it were to shewe her what small occasion she had to loue him.

The Gentlewoman perceiuing her selfe forsaken of him that ought to loue hir, and on the other side loued, and sought vnto of so great and faire a prince, counted her selfe happie to be so much in his fauour. And although she alwayes desired to preserve her honor, yet she took great pleasure to speake vnto him, and to see her selfe beloued; a thing whereof shee had great want. This loue continued for a time, vntill by chance the King perceiued it, who loued the Gentleman her husband so well, that he would not suffer any man to procure his shame or displeasure: wherefore he desired the prince to withdraue his minde, saying that if he did it not, he would be offended with him. The prince that loued the kings fauour and goodwill better than all the Ladies in the world, promised him, that for his sake he would leaue his enterpryse, and that at night he would take his leaue of her: which he did as soone as he vnderstood her to be in her lodging, and the gentleman himselfe was lodged in a chamber ouer hers: and looking out of his chamber window, perceiued the prince to enter into his wifes chamber being vnder his. But the prince that saw him well, said not to enter, and bidding her adieu, whose loue as then did but beginne, tolde her the reason was because the King had commaunded him so to do. After many teares and sighes that continued vntil an houre after midnight, the gentlewoman for conclusion spake and saide: I thanke God (my Lord) that it hath pleased him to alter your opinion, seeing it is so small and feeble that you can take and leaue it at mans commandement. For as for me I haue not asked counsel either of mistris, or of husband, or of my selfe to loue you: for loue helping it selfe with your beautie and honestie, hath had such power ouer me, that I haue not knowne other God or King than it: but seeing your heart is not filled with so true loue, that feare as yet remaineth therein, you cannot be a perfect friend; and of an imperfect I will not make a friend, for that I loue perfectly; as I had determi-

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ned to loue you, but now (my lord) I am constrained to bid
you farewell, whose feare doth not deserue the freedome of
my loue. Which that the Lord departed weeping, and as he
went away, he perceiued her husband stil standing at the win-
dow, that had both seene him goe in and out: wherefore the
next day he told him the occasion why he went vnto his wife,
and the commandement the King had giuen him, wherewith
the Gentleman was wel pleased, and thanked the King: but
seeing his wife daily to waxe fairer than she was, and hee to
the contrary became olde and lesse beautifull, beganne to
change course, taking that which he had caused his wife full
often to vse, for that he made more of her than usually he did,
whereby he tooke more heed vnto her. But the more she per-
ceiued herselfe sought vnto by him, the more she estranged
herselfe from him, desiring to giue him part of the sorowes
and griefes she had had, in being little beloued of him, and
not so soone to lay hold on that pleasure, which loue began to
shew her, she addrest her selfe vnto a young Gentleman so
faire, so well spoken, and of so good a grace that he was belo-
ued of al the ladies in the court. And making her complaints
vnto him, how she had bin well vsed, moued him to haue pi-
ty on her, in such maner, that the Gentleman forgot not any
thing that might comfort her: and she to recompence herselfe
for the losse of a prince that had forsaken her, set her loue so
late vpon the gentleman, that she forgot her sorow past, and
thought of nothing else but howe to behaue her selfe therein,
which she could doe so well, that her mistris neuer perceiued
it, for shee neuer spake vnto him in her presence. But when
she would speake vnto him, she went to visite certaine ladies
that lodged in the Court: among the which there was one
whereof her husband sained to be amorous, and vpon an eue-
ning after supper this gentlewoman stole out when it was
darke without company, and went into the ladies chamber,
wherein she found him to whom she loued better than her selfe,
and sitting hard by him, leaning on a table, they spake toge-
ther, making semblance as if they had bene reading vpon a
booke

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booke: but some one whome her husband had appointed to
 watch her, told him whither his wife was gone: hee being
 craftie, went presently thither, and entering into the chamber,
 perceiued his wife reading in a booke, but making as though
 he sawe her not, went among the ladies to speake to them:
 The poore gentlewoman perceiuing her husband had found
 her in his companie, to whome in his presence she had neuer
 spoken, was in such feare, that she lost all sence, and hauing
 not the meanes to passe by a bench, she slid along by a cab,
 and came away, as if her husband had followed her with a na-
 ked sword in his hand, and went into her mistres chamber,
 who as then was come into her lodging: and when her mi-
 stris was a bed, she went into her owne chamber, where one
 of her maides tolde her, that her husband asked for her: she
 boldly made answer, she would not come at him, saying that
 he was so strange and cruell, that she feared he would do her
 some mischief. But in the ende, lest worse should happen,
 shee went vnto him: when shee came into his chamber, her
 husband gaue her not a word before they were in bed, where
 she that could not dissemble, as he had done, began to weep:
 And when he asked wherefore she wept, she saide: because she
 feared he was angry with her, for that hee had found her by a
 gentleman reading in a booke. To hereunto he answered he
 had neuer forbidden her to speake to any man, and that he di-
 liked not of her speaking to him, but for that she ranne away,
 as if she had done something worthy reproch, and that her
 running away made him verily suspect she loued the gentle-
 man: wherefore he forbaide her, that from that time forward
 she should not speake either priuately or publikely vnto any
 man, assuring her, that the first time she should do it, he would
 kill her without mercy, which she promised to performe, ma-
 king her account at other times not to be so foolish. But be-
 cause that in the things that we most desire, the more we are
 forbidden, so much the more we desire them. This poore wo-
 man had soone forgotten her husbands threatenings, for that
 the same night being returned to her chamber to lie with o-

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the gentleman that attended on hir: she sent to seeke the gentleman, desiring him to come that night to see her. But her husband that was so plagued with iealousie, that he could not sleepe, rose vp, and casting a robe upon his shoulders, calling one of his seruants, went out of his chamber, because he had understode that the yong gentleman went thither by night, and went and knocked at his wiues chamber doore: she that looked for nothing lesse than her husband, rose vp, and putting a mantle about her, and perceiving that three or foure of her maids slepe, went out of the chamber, and came to the doore where he knocked: and asking, who is there: answer was made in the gentlemen name that she loved: but she for more assurance opened a little hatch, saying: if you be hee you say you are, giue me your hand, & I shall know the better: and having touched his husbands hand, she knew it well, and in all haste shutting the hatch beganne to cry out: O sir, it is your hand: her husband answered her and saide, yea it is the hand that shall keepe promise with you, wherefore faile not to come when I send for you: and saying so he went vnto his lodging, and she returned into her chamber rather dead than liuing, and spake aloud vnto her women saying: Tappe my friends you haue bin ouer sleepe for me, for that I thinking to deceiue you, haue deceiued my selfe: and saying so she fainted and fell downe in the middle of the Chamber. The yonge women at that cry rose vp, much abashed to see their mistress lie vpon the ground, and to heare the words she spake for they knew not what to do, but only to find meanes to recover hir: and when she could speake, she said vnto them: this day (my friends) shall you see me the most miserable creature liuing in the earth, and therewith shewd them the cause, desiring them to helpe her, for that she made full account to lose hir life.

They thinking to comfort her, there came one of the Gentlemans seruants, that attended on him in his chamber, that tolde her his maister had sent for her: she thereat (embracing two of her maids beganne to weepe) desiring them not to let her

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her gone, seeing she was assured to die: But the page assured
her the contrary, and that he would venture her life, that she
should have no hurt: So he perceiving that she was in such a
fear, said he would go to her father's house, saying unto him,
My friends, seeing it is thus, but that you carry this unhappy
body into her dear husband's house, and she shall be with you.
She was borne by the page into her husband's lodging, and
whole feet the poor Gentlewoman felt to be so sore, and lay
down, and he said to her, you have pity upon me, and I swear unto
you, of my faith, I will be to you the strength of all. And then
like a desperate man he said: By God you shall tell me the
truth: and therewith he took all his servants forth. And be-
cause he had found his wife to be very devout, he thought he
would not forsware herself, and that she would upon the
cross: wherefore he called for a very faire Crucifix, that he
had bought, and they two being alone together, made her
swear by it, that she would tell him truth in what he should
ask her. But she that already had past the first want of
the fear of death took comfort, determining before she
died, not to hide any thing from him, and also not to tell him
up things whereby the Gentleman whom she loved, might be
brought in among: and having heard the questions he propo-
unded, answered him, and says: I will not tell you my
self, neither yet dissimble the same unto you: I be sworn to
the Gentleman to whom you suspect, for that you neither can
nor ought to believe it: considering the expressions that this
day you have had, but I am sorry to be so in your
occasion: therefore, for you must understand that I
will not say any word that I have said, as I have told you, for
that since I came to you until this time, there never entered
any other thought into mine heart then one, yours: you know
that I being a child, my parents sought to marry me to a
man of greater name than yourself, yet could they never
make me agree unto it, after I once had spoken unto you, for
that against all their minds I remained constant, to have you,
not respecting your poverty, my friends instructions to the
con-

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contrary: and you are not ignorant what intertainment I
haue hitherto had of you, and how you haue loued and esteem-
ed me, whereby I haue had so much ioy and grieve, that
without the helpe of my lady with whom you placed me, I
was in maner desperate: but in the end perceiuing my selfe to
waite of more pities, and of all men, except your selfe esteem-
men faire, I began in such sort to feele the displeasure of the
wrong you did me, that the loue I bare vnto you, turned into
hatred, and the desire to please you, changed into reuenge:
and in this dispaire a prince beloxed to me, who to obey the
king more then loue, left me at such time as I began to feele
the comfort of my torment by an honest loue: and leauing
him, I found this Gentleman, that needed not to iurre at me,
for that his beauty, honesty and vertues deserved to be requir-
ed and loued vnto of all women of good iudgement. At my
request, and not at his, he hath loued me, with so honest a
minde, that neuer in his life did he require any thing of mee
contrary to mine honour. And although the small loue that
I haue cause to beare vnto you, gaue me occasion neither to
flee without loyalty vnto you, the loue which I onely beare
to God and to mine honour, haue hitherto preserved me from
doing that, for the which I should need any confession, or
feare of shame. I will not deny, but that as often as possible
I could, I went to speake with him in a gallery, vnder pre-
tence to go to prayer, for that I neuer put my trust either in
man or woman to be a meanes therein. I will likewise not
deny, that being in so secret a place, and out of all suspicion,
but that I kissed him with a better heart, then euer I kiss you,
but yet I neuer aske mercy at Gods hands, if that betwixt vs
be thus there euer was other kinde of intimacy, or euer he
sought more at my hands, or that euer my heart had other
desire, for that I was so well pleased to see him, that me
thought there was no greater pleasure in the world. And you
sir, that are the onely cause of my mishap, would you be re-
pented on a deed, where you your selfe haue so long time gi-
uen me an example, yours being wholly without honour or
consci-

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conscience: for you know and I am well assured, that shee
whom you loue contenteth not her selfe with that which god
and reason commandeth. And although the lawes of man do
attribute so great dishonour vnto women, that loue other
men besides their husbands, yet it is so, that the lawe of God
doeth not exempt the husband that loueth other women then
his wife: and if both our offences were put into a paire of
ballance it would soone be tried which were heauiest: you are
a man in yeares, wise and of good experience, to knowe and
vnderstand how to auoid euill; I am young and wholly with-
out experience to know the force and power of loue. You
haue a wife, that seeketh, loueth & esteemeth you, more then
her owne life, and I haue a husband that flieth from me, that
hateth and despiseth me, more then a poore seruant. You
loue a woman already in yeares, and of no great beauty, in
respect of me, and I loue a Gentleman younger, fairer, and
amiable then you. You loue the wife of one of the greatest
friends you haue in all the world, on the one side offending
the Auntee, and on the other side the reuerence you beare vnto
them both; and I loue a Gentleman that is not bound nor
linked vnto any, but only to the loue he beareth me. Now Sir
I pray you without partiality to iudge, which of vs two is
most worthy of punishment or to be excused, I know not a-
ny man of experience, but would lay the fault on you, seeing
that I am young and ignorant, despised and contemned of
you, & loued of the fairest & honestest Gentleman in France,
whom I loue, being in despaire neuer to be beloued of you.
The Gentleman hearing those speeches full of truth, and
uttered with a countenance so faire, together with so good
a spirit, that thereby she shewed not any feare to haue deser-
ued punishment, found himselfe so surprised with doubt, that
he could make her no other answer, then only that the honor
of a man and of a woman make no lesse, nor yet all one, but
that neuerthelesse seeing she swaie there was no sin between
her friend and her, he determineth not to doe her any hurt, so
that shee neuer bleuiet againe: and that neither hee nor shee
would

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would ever call to minde their griefes and iniuries forepast, which she promised to oblerue; and with that they went to bed, as good friends. In the morning an old Gentleman that was in great feare of her mistris life, came vnto her when she arose, asking her and said; well Madam howe doe you? she answered her laughing, why sweete heart, there is not a better husband in the world then mine, for hee beleened me vpon mine oath. In that waier fve or six daies passed ouer, wherein the Gentleman so narrowly watched his wife, that both night and daie, she had those that looked to her: but he could not watch her so well but that she spake vnto him she loued in a very darke and suspicious place. Yet she did it so secretly that neither man nor woman could euer haue known it, had it not been for a report that a seruiceman gaue sooth that he had found a Gentleman and a Gentlewoman together in a stall vnder the chamber of this Lady: whereat the Gentleman her husband had so great suspicion, that he determined to kill the Gentleman, and to the same end assembled a great number of his kinsmen and friends, that if they could finde him in any place to kill him: but his chiefe kinsman was so great a friend vnto the Gentleman whom hee sought for, that in stead of taking him, aduertised him what was done against him: who on the other side was so well beloued in the court, and so well accompanied that he feared not his enemies, so that he could not be found; but being in a Church, went in to the mistris of his loue, that neuer had heard of any thing that had past, for that before her hee neuer spake vnto her. The Gentleman told her of the suspicion and haired her husband bare vnto him, and that notwithstanding his innocency he was determined to absent himselfe by some long boyadge, to auoide the suspicion already begon: the princes, mistris to his friend, was much abashed to heare those speeches, and sware that the husband did wrong to suspect so honest a woman as his wife, in whom she had neuer found other then vertue and honestie. Neuerthelesse because of the authoritie of her husband, and to quench suspicion, the
princes

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princes counselled him to absent himselfe for a certaine time, assuring him that she would not beleue any of her husbands folies or suspicions. The Gentleman and the Gentlewoman her waiting mayde were very well content to remaine in the good opinion and fauour of the princes, who counselled the Gentleman, that befoze his departure he should speake with her husband, which he did, finding him in a gallery hard by the Kings chamber, where with a bold countenance (greeting him his due honour) he saide vnto him. Sir, I haue alwaies had a great desire to doe you seruice, and for my labour I vnderstand that the last night you sought to kill mee, I beseech you sit remember that you haue more authority & power then I haue, yet I am a Gentleman as well as you, it would grieue me much to loose my life for nothing: I beseech you likewise thinke that you haue an honest woman, and that if there be any man that will affirme the contrary, I will plainly tell him that he lyeth, and for my parte, I thinke I haue not done any thing whereby you should haue cause to beare mee ill will; wherefoze if it please you, I am your friend, if not I am the Kings, whereby I haue occasion to content my selfe. The Gentleman to whom he spake sayd, that truely he had had some suspicion of him, but that he accounted him so honest a man, that he would rather desire his loue, then otherwise; and bidding him farewell with his hat in hand embraced him as his great friend. You may wel thinke what they said, which the night befoze had had commission for to kill him, when they sawe so great shewes of friendship and loue betweene them, whereof euery man did speake: with that the Gentleman departed: but because he was not so wel furnished of money as of beauty, his Lady gaue him a iewell worth 3000. crownes, which he layed to pawne for 1500. And not long after his departure the married Gentleman went vnto the chamber of the Princes, his wifes mistress, desiring her to giue his wife leave for a time to lie at one of his sisters houses: which the princes found very strange, desiring him to let her knowe the cause, who tolde

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her part, but not all. After the young married Gentlewoman had taken her leaue of the princes, and of all the court without weeping or any signe of griefe, went vnto the place where her husband had appointed, being in the conduct of a Gentleman that had expresse charge to looke carefully vnto her, and especially that as she rode in the way, she should not speake vnto him for whom he suspected her. She that knew her husbands straight commaundement, every day during their iourney, gaue them some alarme, mocking both them and their negligent watch: and one day among the rest, as they went out of their lodging, she found a frier on horsebacke, and she likewise on a gelding, entertained him from noone till night: and being about a mile from their lodging, she sayd vnto him, Father, for the good counsels and comforts you haue giuen me this afternoone, there are two French crowns which I giue you, that are within a paper because I know you dare not touch them, praying you that as soone as you depart from me, you will gallop in all haste ouer the fieldes. And when he was somewhat farre off from the Gentlewoman, she spake aloud vnto her seruants, saying: Doe you thinke your selues good seruants, and careful of your charge, when he whom ye are expressely commanded not to let speake with me hath bene with me all this afternoone, and you neuer sought to hinder him: you deserue that your maister, which trusteth so much in you, should giue you blowes in stead of wages. When the Gentleman that had charge of her, heard those speeches, he was in such a rage, that he could not speake a word, but spurred his horse, and calling two of the men with him, did so much that they overtooke the frier: who seeing them come towards him, fled as fast as he could, but because they were better horse then he they overtook him, and he that knew not wherefore, cried them mercy, and putting off his hood with more humility to intreat them, they knew well it was not he they sought, and that their mistresse had mocked them, which she did much more at their returne, saying vnto them: Such men as you, ought to haue the keeping

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ping of a woman, for when you haue letten her speake you know not to whome, giuing credit to her words, you goe and do iniury to the seruants of God. And after all these mocks, she arrived at the place where her husband had appointed her to be, being by her two sisters in law, & one of their husbands kept in great subiection. Meane time her husband understood that her iewell lay at pawne for 1500. crownes, for the which he was sorry: but to saue his wifes credit, and to haue it againe, he tolde her that she should fetch it, and he would pay the 1500. crownes. She that cared not for the iewell, seeing her friend had the money, wrote vnto him, how that her husband would constrain her to redeeme the iewell: and to the end he should not thinke she did it for want of good will, shee sent him a diamond that her mistresse had giuen her, which shee loued more then any iewell shee had. The Gentleman willingly sent her the marchants obligation, and contented himselfe to haue had 1500. crownes and a diamond, and to be assured of his friends good will, although that as long as her husband liued he had no more meanes to speake vnto her but by letters. And after her husbands death, because he thought her to be the same she alwayes promised him, he vied all the meanes he could to haue her in mariage. But he found that his long absence had gotten her a friend whom she loued better: whereat he tooke such grieve, that shunning all Gentlewomen, he sought aduencures, where he obtained as much honour as any young Gentleman could haue, and so ended his dayes.

The thirteenth Nouell.

A Gentlewoman of Millan tried the boldnesse and great courage of her louer, for the which after that shee loued him perfectly.



At the time of the great maister du Chaumont, there was a Gentlewoman esteemed one of the honestest women in her time living within the City of Millan, she married an Italian Earle, whose widow she was, living in a house of her husbands

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husbands brethren neuer caring or desiring to heare any speech of marryng againe, behauing hir selfe so wisely and so holily that there was not any French man or Italian within that Dutchie, which made not great account of her. Upon a day as her brethren and her mother in lawe made a great feast for the great maister du Chamoune, this Lady being a widow was constrained to be there, which in other places shee vied not; and when the French men sawe her, they esteemed much her beauty and good grace, specially one whose name I will not disclose: but it sufficeth you to knowe that there was not any Frenchman in Italie worthier then he to be beloued; for that hee was adorne with all the beauties and good qualities a Gentleman may haue: and although he saw this Lady (being a widow) wearing a blacke lynes, separated from the younger Ladies, and bearing company with the eldier sort, as one to whome man or woman coulde neuer procure feare, he began to entertaine her, taking away his vizard and leauing off to dance, that he might sit by her, and all that night left not off to speake vnto her, and the olde ladies together, wherein he found more pleasure then with all the brauest and youngest Ladies in the court, in such maner, that when he should recite he thought hee had had the leisure onely to sit downe: and although he spake not to this Lady, but onely of common matters, which might be spoken in such company, yet he perceiued wel he was desirous to acquaine himselfe with her: so that he determined to obtaine as much as possible she might, in such maner that he could neuer after finde her at any feast or banquet: whereupon he enquired what her common exercises were, and found that she often vied to the Church and diuers religious houses, where hee made so good watch, that she could not go so secretly but hee was there before her, and that he stayed in the Church as long as he might haue meanes to see her, and that as long as he was ther he beheld her with so great affectiō, that he could not be ignorant of the loue he bare her: which to auoid, he determined for a time to feigne her selfe sick, and to heare masse with-

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In her house; whereat the Gentleman was so grieved as
more he could not be, for that he had no other means to see
her but onely as I said before: she thinking to haue broken off
that custome, went vnto the Churches as before she vled to
doe, which loue presently made knowne vnto the Gentleman
who renewed his first deuotions, and fearing least she should
finde out some other means of hinderance, and that he might
not haue the time to let her know his minde, one morning as
she thought her selfe well hidden within a little Chappell,
where she heard masse, he went and placed himself, at the end
of the alter: and perceiuing that she had but smal company, as
the Priest held by the Corpus Domini, he turned vnto her,
and with a vnfit speech and great affection said vnto her: Da-
dame, I take him whom the Priest holdeth in his hands for
my damnation, if you onely be not the cause of my death, for
although you take from me, all meanes of speaking to you,
yet can you not be ignorant of my desire, seeing that truth suf-
ficiently declareth it vnto you by my languishing eyes, and
dead countenance. The Lady counterfeiting not to know his
meaning, answered him and sayd; God ought not to be serued
in this manner, but Poets doe commonly say, that Gods do
laugh at the othes and lies of louers, wherefore women that
loue their honours ought to be neither credulous nor pitifull.
And saying so she rose and went vnto her lodging: if the gen-
tleman was displeased at those wordes they that haue tryed
the like wil say yea: but he that wanted no courage, desired ra-
ther that hard answer, then to haue failed to declare his
mind, which for the space of three yeares he helde most con-
stantly, and both by letters and other meanes ceased not dai-
ly to sollicite her: but during three yeares space, he could ne-
uer obtaine other answer, but that she fled from him, as the
wolfe doth from the dogs, fearing to be taken, not for any
hatred she did beare vnto him, but for the danger of her ho-
nour and reputation, which hee perceiued so well that more
earnestly then before hee followed his suit: and after many
paines, refusals, torments, and dispaire, perceiuing the
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continuance of his loue, this Lady had pittie on him, & granted him that he had so long and earnestly desired, and when they had agreed vpon the meanes, the French Gentleman failed not to ballard him selfe to go vnto her house, although his life thereby might be in great danger, because his kinsmen lodged in the same house. He that had no lesse subtilty then beauty, behaued himselfe so wisely, that he entered into her chamber at the time she had appointed, where he founde her alone lying in a rich bed, and as he made haste to put off his cloathes to go to bed vnto her, he heard a great noise of mens voyces speaking softly, and of swords that strake against the wals.

The Lady with a face halfe dead said vnto him, nowe at this time your life and my honour are in the greatest dainger that euer they were, for there I heare my brethren which seek for you to kill you: wherefore I pray you hide you vnder the bed, for when they finde you not, I shall haue an occasion to be offended with them, for that without cause they haue giuen me such alarme. The Gentleman that as yet had neuer been afraid sayd vnto her, and what are your brethren to make an honest man afraid? if all the race of the were beere in presence, I am sure they would not stay the fourth blowe that I should giue, wherefore lie you still, and let me keepe the doze: with that he wrapt his cloake about his arme, and hauing his sword in hand, he went to open the doze to see his enemies weapons, whereof he heard the noise, and hauing opened it, he saw two maides that had two swordes in each hand, wherewith they gaue him that alarme, which said vnto him, pardon vs sir, for we haue commandment from our mistreis to doe so: but you shall haue no more trouble by our meanes. The Gentleman perceiuing them to bee women, could not doe lesse then with them at the diuell, shutting the doze against them, and as soone as he could, went to bed vnto the Lady, whose feare had not in any thing diminished his loue, and forgetting to aske her the causes of her skirmishes, had no other thought but to satisfie his desire. But percei-
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uing day to appeare, desired her to tell him why he had done him that iniury, not onely in prolonging time, but also in that last enterprise, she laughing answered him, saying: my determination was neuer to loue which sure my widdowe-hood I had alwaies obserued, but your honesty from the time you spake vnto me, at the banquet made me, change opinion, and that I began as then to loue you as much as you loued me, it is true thst loue which alwaies guided me, would not permit that loue should cause me doe the thing wherby mine honour should be ought impaired but as the hinde wounded to death, thinketh in changing places, to change the euill which she beareth in her body, so I went from Church to Church thinking to flie that which I bare within my heart, whereof I haue made so perfect prooffe, that it hath made mine honor to consent vnto my loue, but to the end I might be well assured to place my loue and my heart in a perfect honest man, I thought to make this prooffe which my maides haue now effected, assuring you, that for feare of life or other respect, I had found you fearefull, so that you had hidden your selfe vnder my bed, I was determined to haue risen, and haue gone into an other chamber, without euer seeing you more: but because I haue found you faire, of good grace, and full of vertue and hardines, more then was certified vnto me, and that feare could not ouercome your heart, nor in any sort lessen the loue you beare vnto me, I am determined to content my selfe with you, vntill I die, being assured that I cannot put my life and honour into a better hand, then in his, whose like for vertues I neuer found. And so as if the mindes of men were not mutable they sware and promised that which was not in their powers, that is a perpetuall amity, which cannot spring nor yet dwell in mans heart, and they knowe it well, that haue tried and known how long such opinions doe continue.

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The foureteenth Nouell.

A poore simple cuntry man, whose wife loued the Curate of the Church suffereth himselfe easily to be deceaued.

In the County of Maine, in a villadge called Arcelles there was a rich husbandman, that in his age had married a faire young wench, that had no childzen by him: but for the losse she had by him, till she recompenced her selfe with other men, and when gentlemen and other good companions failed she turned to her last reliefe, which was the Church, and made him companion of her sinne, that could absolue her, which was the Curate, that oftentimes came to visit his sheepe. The husband being old and crasse, suspected nothing, but because he was rude and churlish, his wife played her part as secretly as shee could, fearing that if her husband should perceiue it, he would kill her. Upon a day as he was abroad, his wife thinking he would come so soone againe, sent for the Curate to confesse her, and as they made good chere together, her husband came in vpon the sodaine, whereby the Curate had not leislure to go vnto his house, but deuised meanes to hide himselfe, and by the womans counsell went into a barne, and couered the staires head where he went by with a fanne of corne, the husband being in the house; the least he should suspect her, made him so good cheere to dinner, that she spared no drink, whereof he tooke so much, that together with the wearines he had by labouring in the fieldes, he fell a sleepe, sitting in a chaire before the fire. The Curate being weary to be so long in the barne, hearing no noyse in the chamber, went vnto the staires, & thrusting out his necke as farre as he could to looke down, perceiued the good man to be a sleepe, and looking earnestly vpon him, leand so hardy vpon the fanne, that both fanne and he fell vnto the ground, hard by the old man that slept, where
with

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with he waked: the Curate that arose vp sooner then the man could open his eyes, said vnto him there is your fanne, and I thanke you, wherewith he went his way; and the poore man being abasht asked what it was: she answered him, it is your fanne that the Curate borrowed, and nowe hath brought it home, he grumbling said, doe men vse to bring home things they borrowe in such rude maner, I thought the house would haue fallen downe, by which meanes the Curate saued himselfe to the poore mans cost, that found fault with nothing but that he brought his fanne so rudely home.

The fifteenth Nouell.

¶ The strange fragilitie of man, that to couer his honour falleth from euil to worse.

In the time of king Lewes the twelfth, one of the house of Ambois nephew to the legat of France named George, being legat in Auigneon, had in the country of Languedoc a Lady, whose name I wil not rehearse for her kinreds sake, that had better than foure thousand crownes yearely reuenu: she being very yong was a widow, and had but one child, being a sonne; and for griefe she had for the losse of her husband, as also for the loue of her sonne, determined not to marry againe. And to auoyde all occasions would not vse the company of any other than religious persons, thinking that sinne causeth temptations, whereby the yong widow gaue her selfe only to diuine seruice, wholly forsaking worldly company, in such maner that she made conscience to goe to any wedding, or to heare the Organs play within the church. When her sonne was seuen yeares olde, shee chose a man of zealous life to be his schoolemaister, by whose good meanes he might be brought vp in godlinesse. When his sonne entred into his fifteenth yeare, Nature, which of it selfe is a secret Schoolemaister,

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finding him too delicately nourished, and full of idlenesse, taught him an other lesson, than his maister used to do, for that he beganne to beholde and respect thinges that seemed faire; and among the rest a gentlewoman that lodged in his mothers chamber, wherof no man ever doubted, for that they no more respected him, than a yong infant; no other thing being spoken of in the whole house but godlinesse. This yong gentleman began secretly to seek vnto the maid that told it to her mistris, who loued and esteemed her sonne so much, that she suspected the maide to tell it her, onely to make her hate him: but she was so importunate with her mistris, that shee said vnto her, I wil know if it be true, and assure your selfe I wil correct him if I finde it to be so: but if you tell mee an vntruth, I wil make you feelee the price thereof. And to finde the trueth she willed her to appoint her sonne to come about midnight to lie with her in a bed neere vnto the doore of the chamber where the maide lay. The maide obeyed her mistris: and when night came the Gentlewoman laide her selfe in hir maides bed, determining if it were true, to correct her sonne so well, that neuer after he should desire to lie with maide againe. And in that thought and displeasure her sonne came to bed vnto her. She, although she saw him lie downe, would not yet beleue he would commit any dishonest act, but stayed to speake with him, vntil she perceiued some signes of bad desire: but not being perswaded with so small a signe, that he would proceed further, was so long patient, and so fraile of nature, that she conuerted her choller into a most abhominable pleasure, forgetting the name of mother: and euen as water that by force is holden in, when it issueth forth, maketh more noyse than that which runneth his ordinary course, so this poore lady turned her glozy into the restraint she gaue vnto her body. And when she proceeded to decline from the first degree of honestie, she found her selfe sodainly caried and borne vnto the last; and the saide night became with child by him, whom she sought to keepe from getting others with childe. The same was no sooner committed, but the remorse
of

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of conscience, brought her into into so great torment, that the repentance neuer left her during her whole life, which at the first was so sharp, that she rose out of the bed from her sonne, that knew no other but it had bin the maid, and went into a closet, where calling her good determination vnto mind, and the wicked execution thereof, she passed all the night in weeping and lamenting all alone: but in stead of acknowledging of the impossibilitie of our flesh, that without Gods help, can not but sinne, desiring by her selfe, and by her teares to satisfie hir fault past, and by hir wisdom to auoyde the euill to come, she laide the excuse of her sinne vpon the occasion, and vpon the weakenes of flesh and blood, whereunto there is no remedy but only by the grace of God: she thought to do that, whereby in time to come she might not fall into the like inconuenience; and as though there were but one kinde of sinne to damne men, she deuised all the meanes she could to auoyde the same. But the roote of pride which externall sinne should heale, increased in her heart; in such maner, that by auoyding one mischiefe she fel into diuers others: for the next morning as soone as it was day, she sent for her sonnes Schoole maister and said vnto him; Now my son beginneth to wax great, it is time to send him abroade. I haue a kinsman that dwelleth beyond the mountains with Monsieur the great maister du Chaimont that will be very glad to haue him in his company, wherefore I pray you bring him thither: and to the end I be not grieued with his departure, let him not come to take his leaue of me. And saying so, she gaue him money to beare his charges for the voyage: and the same morning caused the yong gentleman to depart, that was very glad at nothing else than after the inioping the pleasure of his loue, to goe vnto the wars. The lady continued long time in great melancholy and distresse; and had it not bin for the feare of God, she had often wished the end of the vnfortunat fruit she bare within her body. In the end she fained to be sicke, that vnder that pretext she might couer her imperfection: and being ready to be buried, remembering that there was no

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man in the world in whome she so much trusted, as a bastard brother of hers, whom she intertained & did him much good; she sent for him, and shewing him her hard fortune (but made him not acquainted that it was by her sonne) desired him to help her, and to saue her honour, which he did: and not long before she should lie downe, he gaue her counsell to chaunge the air, and to go to his house, where she might sooner recover her health than in her owne. She went thither but with small traine, and there she found a midwife ready for her, that by night not knowing her, brought her to bed of a fayre daughter: the gentleman deliuered it vnto a nurse, and caused it to be nursed for his owne. The Lady hauing stayed there a moneth, went home vnto her owne house, where after that she liued more strictly than euer she did, both in fasting and discipline. But when her sonne became great, perceiuing no warre to be in Italie, he sent to desire his mother that hee might come see her: shee fearing to fall into the euill from whence she had escaped, would not permit him, till in the end he was so importunate with her, that she had no reason to deny him. Neuerthelesse she sent him word, that he should neuer come vnto her, if he were not married to a wife that he loued wel; and that he should not respect her riches, so she were honest, and it should suffice. In the meane time her bastard brother perceiuing the daughter whereof he had the charge, to waxe great, & very faire, thought to place her in some house farre off, where shee should not be knowne; and by the mothers counsell, gaue her vnto the Queene of Nauarre. This daughter named Katharine grew to the age of twelue or thirteene yeres, and became so faire & honest, that the Q. of Nauarre bare her good affection, and desired much to marry her richly. But by reason she was poore, she found herselfe to haue suiters great store, but none that would bee her husband. Upon a day it happened that the Gentleman that was her vnkowne father, returning from the other side of the Alpes, went vnto the Queene of Nauarres house, where he had no sooner espied the mayd, but he became amorous of her,

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her, and because he had licence of his mother to marry one that liked him, he tooke no care but onely to haue a wife that pleased his fantasie, and knowing her to be such, asked her in marriage of the Queen, that most willingly consented as knowing the Gentleman to be rich, and with his riches both faire and honest. The marriage being finished the Gentleman wrote vnto his mother that from thenceforth she neede not refuse him her house, for seeing he brought with him as faire a wife as any could be found, the Gentlewoman that enquired with what house he had matched himselfe, found hee had married their owne daughter, wherewith she was in such despaire, that he presently thought to die, perceiving that the more she sought to hinder her grieffe, the more she was the means to increase the same. Whereupon not knowing what to doe, she went vnto the Legate being at Aigniton, to whom she confessed the greatnes of her sinne, asking his counsell what she should doe therein. The Legat to satisfie her desire, sent for certayne deuines, to whom he vetered the matter not naming the persons, & found by their counsel, that the Gentlewoman ought not to make it knowne vnto her children, for that for their parts considering their ignorance, they had not sinned, but that she during her life ought to do penance without making any shew thereof. Which done, the poore woman returned home, where not long after arriued her sonne and her daughter in lawe that loued so wel, that neuer husband nor wife loued in better sort, for she was both his daughter, sister, and wife, & he too her father, brother and husband; in which great amity they continued long: and the poore Gentlewoman in her extreame penance, that neuer sawe them merry, but shee withdrew her selfe to weepe.

The

The Queene of

The sixteenth Nouell.

Of a merry conceited Bricke-layer, that had a curst queane to his wife, and of that which happened.

In the towne of Eleare nere Aragon, there is a village called S. Portis the faire, where there dwelt a handsome proper fellow, as any in Paris, where he was borne; and for his valour he durst haue trauailed into any Gentlemans buttery, where all the barrells had beene full, without either dagger or sword about him. For his resolution, if he had once gotten vnder a maydes chamber window, he would neuer haue started, till they had emptied a chamber pot on his head. For his courage he durst haue gone into any bawdy house, and would haue come out againe as honest a man as when he went first in. For his credit, he might haue runne on the score for sixe pots with any Alewife that kept house within five miles where he dwelt. For his qualities every maner of way, he had the preheminance amongst all the youths that were in those quarters; for at Maytide, who was the ring-leader for the fetching home of a Maypole, but he: at Whitsunsummer he was chosen the Summer lord: at euery bridall, who must dance with the bride, but lusty Roger: Thus for a pleasant life, the Constable of Paris liued not more merrily then he. And for his reputation, he was almost as much reuerenced as our Churchwardens. But as the stoutest stand of ale at last is set on tilt, and the fattest goose comes soonest to the spitte; so his former fortunes were drawn to the latest date, and his prime of pleasures concluded with mishap. But oh loue, oh cruell loue, that was the first fruit to his felicities. But who can resist loue, if it be once crept into the bottome of a mans belly: oh what a rumbling it makes in his guts, and how it bethrobs him about the heart. And see now the sequele of his mishappe: he fortun'd to be at a sheepshearing, where

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where he met with a pretty wench, named Silly, in a fine red peticoate, with damaske upper bodies, a white apron before her: and vpon her head a broad felt hat, with a braue branch of rosemary sticking in her bosome, appointed amongst the rest with a paire of sheares to helpe sheare sheep, and he hauing brought forth a lusty poong ramme, would haue laide him in her lappe; but she refusing to take him, said vnto him: Now good friend Roger, if you loue me, bring me none but polde sheepe; for of all things in the world, I cannot abide these horned beasts. When he heard these milde words, that gently spoken, and how kindly she pronounced this sentence (Good friend Roger, if you loue me) oh heauen! (thought he) what a sweet charme is this: then noting her modestie, that she could not abide the sight of an horned beast, he began to thinke with himselfe, how happy might that man be accounted that could light of such a wife. And hauing but a little giuen scope to his owne affections, Ioue that had his tinder bore ready to strike fire, by this time had set his fancy of such a flame, that not longer able to endure the heat without a cup of sacke, he sayd vnto her: Sister, your maner of phrase hath wonderfully troubled me: for in your first speeches you call me your good friend Roger, and then you came in with a doubtfull demand, in these words (if you do loue me) as though I could be your good friend, and yet did not loue you: but Silly, such you haue popt me such a doubtfull question, if you and I were alone by our selues, I would pop you such an answer, that you should well finde that I loued you, and that hereafter you might leaue out your, If, and say. Roger Alse you loue me.

With these words, pretily casting her head at one side, she gaue him such a leering looke, that might aswell haue danted him with dispaire, as gaue him comfort and hope of grace, for the one of her eyes was bleared, and seemed as though she wept, the other was a pretie pinkeny, looking euer as though she smiled, so that in her very countenance at one instance, you might easely beholde pleasure, and paine, pittie, and rigor.

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gour, curtesie and crueltie, loue and disdain; and then with a sweet voice, like one that were asking an almes, she sayd: Roger, if you loue me as you say, your loue shall not be lost: but men are so crafty now adayes before they are married, that they will make a mayde beleene they loue her, till they haue got by her belly, and then they wil not stick to deny their owne children, and that makes women when they be once married, to play their husbands such a cast, that they shall not know their owne children, but if your loue be no such loue, Roger, you shall not finde me unkinde: when he heard the wiledome of the wench, it made his pulces so to beate, that he had thought his cowpisse point would haue broken a sunder: but for an answere he said,

Silly, your sober speeches so wisely deliuered, together with your sweet countenance so liuely placed, hath so preuailed with your good friend Roger, that for the better confirmation of my loue receaue here this token, as a pledge of my good will, and taking then a twopenny piece which hee had in his purse, he bowed it and gaue it vnto her, the which when she had receiued, she said,

Tell Roger, now I doe account you as mine owne, and at night when my mother is gone to bedde, if you will come home, we will there talke further of this matter: and for your welcome I will bestowe of you a messe of creame.

Silly, (says he) looke you keepe your promise, for I will be there, and because you will be at so much cost with a messe of creame, I will bring with me a penny worth of spice cakes: and although they had thus referred their further speeches til their next meeting, yet during the time that they remained there in place, many amorous glances, & louing countenances, there passed still too and fro between them: but at night the appointed time being come, thither he went, and Silly, was at the window watching for his coming, who hauing once espied him, she opened the doze, where she receiued him with such a sweete kisse, as if her breath had beene lately perfumed for the purpose, whose dainty smell was as sabery, as

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if it had beene a red herring that had beene newly roasted, her
louely lippes pleasant and soft, like a Locke of wool, that was
but then come out of the seame basket: but should I tell you
of al the other loue tricks that passed betwixt him and her that
night, I might either oppresse your stomacks to thinke of it,
or otherwise perhaps make you ashamed to heare it. But let
this suffice, before they departed their marriage day was ap-
pointed, and Silly, in time made her mother acquainted with
the matter, who nothing mistaking of her daughters choyse,
gaue her her blessing, with many other good helps to furnish
foorth her byrdall day: the which when time had drawen to
be solemnized, & that the lusty youths of the parish were ga-
thered together to go with vs to Church, and the young dam-
sels were flocked on a heape to walke on the bride, attending
her coming foorth, the good olde woman her mother, who
had beene euer chary of the louely chicken her daughter, and
euen at the very instant when we were ready to go to church,
she was schooling of her with this exhortation.

Silly (said she) the day is now come which you haue so
much longed after, it is twenty yeares ago since you first
wished for a husband, & byrlady daughter, you were then se-
uenteene or eightene yeares of age, so that at this present
you want not aboue two or thre of forty: now if we went
by yeares, you are olde enough to be wise: but I being your
mother, besides my many yeares, which might aduance my
skill: so I haue buried foure seuerall husbands (the heauens
be praised for it) which hath so much the more confirmed my
experience in the dispositions of men, and can the better iudge
of their naturall inclinations: and by all that I haue gathe-
red by my own prooue and practise, I haue found it still by
triall, that the fantasies of men, are euer best fitted with the
follies of women: but leauing generalities, and to come to
so much as concerneth but thy selfe, thou art now to be mari-
ed to a husband, who in respect of his age thou mightst be his
mother: and couldest thou now but consider, what a comfort
it is for an old woman, to be embraced by a young man, &

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daughter daughter, thy mothers mouth beginnes to water, but with the very imagination to thinke of the pleasure, and therefore happy maiest thou deeme thy selfe, that art so likely to inioy it.

But here is now a great piece of discretion to be vsed, for as age conceiueth such contentment with the society of flesh and pleasant youth, so youth will quickly fall a loathing of olde and crooked age, if the parties be not wise to enforce that by art, that they are otherwise detained by nature: which is, to shew a youthfull disposed minde how farre soeuer they be spent in yeares, for it is a tyred iade that cannot cry weehee, and a soxe mare that cannot wag her taile: thou art now to consider the inequality of the yeares betweene thy selfe and thy husband: and therefore a little to whet him on to make him to like the better of thee, it shall not be a misse for thee to shewe some youthfull conceipt, especially being thy bridall day, it is tollerable for thee a little to play the wanton. I tel thee daughter, men are well pleased to see their wiues youthfully giuen, as there is nothing doth more delight them, then to see them wantonly disposed: and this is the means to win your husbands liking, & to draw him to that appetite, which your many yeares might quench: remember therefore what I haue tolde you, and faile not for your advantage, to shewe some youthfull trick.

Silly, making a manerly curtesie, sayd: yes forsooth mother, I will remember all that you haue tolde me: by this time all things being prepared, to Church they went, where the Priest hauing once done his office, they returned againe, and were accompanied with her neighbours and friends that went home to dinner with them, for whom there was provided furmentie, and minced pies, besides other good meates both rost and sad, the which being all ready, Sillye was placed at the vpper end, between two of the most substantial honest men according to the custome of the parish and himselfe likewise (as the maner was) did wait that day at the table with a napkin hanging on his shoulder.

But

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But o what a comfort it was vnto him, to see how daintily Sissy fed of euery dish that came to the table, and howe lustily she sayd about her for her victuals, and (though hee) if it be true as some men say, that a good feeding horse will go through with his labour, then I warront you if I giue Sissie her meate, I neede not feare to ride her where I list: but dinner being almost at an end, and the cakebread & cheese readie to be set on the table, the good old woman her mother who had likewise beene verp busie that daie in taking paines to fill the pots, & to carie away empty dishes, began to cheere vp the companie, bidding them welcome, and telling them she was soie there was no better cheere for them.

Sissie, presently vpon the sight of her mother, bethought her selfe what she had to doe, and calling now to minde what lesson she had giuen her, and how she had willed her that day to shew some youtfull trick, thereby to purchase the fauor of her husband, and picking out at that very instant a fitte opportunity to perfourme it, she called to her mother, in this youtful maner, Mamma, vp and cack, the old woman hearing her daughter, said: why how now Sissie, fie for shame, will you speake bugs words: could you not pretily haue said I pray you mother haue nie vp to picke a roase, nay now I see you plaie the wanton too much, then speaking to the companie that sate by, she said: I pray you bear with my daughters childshnes, for I know it is the surmentie that doth so much annoy her, for euen from her infancie, if shee had taken any spoone meate, she was stil troubled in the bottome of her backe side with a great ventosity.

The neighbours seeing the cleanelinesse of the wench, did euer after that call her by the name of manerly Sissy. Let this suffice: within a very few months after he was married, Sissy began to grow ielous: for if she had bin once thirsty, and that he wanted money to send to the alehouse, she would tell him that hee spent away his thrift amongst some other pong queanes. Here began our first falling out: and to see forward the matter, there dwelt at the very next house by him

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a Taylor that had a wife, who was sure once a day to measure the breadth of her husbands shoulders with his owne metyard.

Silly and this Taylors wife grew to be acquainted; and amongst other conclusions it was agreed between them, that to prevent diseases, & to preserve them in health, they would every morning next their hearts, take a physicall diet, which was, a full quarte of the quintessence drawne from an Ale tub, warmed by the fire, with a grated nutmeg, halfe a peare of blacke pudding roasted, a quancitie of salt, with a measure of fine wheat flower, first made into paste, and after baked in a loafe of bread: these ingrediences after they had incorporated together, they would afterwarde lightly fast till noone; and they found such a commoditie in using the medicine, that if the Taylor and he had not every morning given them money to pay for the simples, it had not beene good for them to come that day after in their sights; for the Taylors wife she could handle a metyard or a cudgell passing nimbly. But Silly had gotten the practise of all manner of weapons; and besides that, she had the use of her nailes, which she employed many times about my face: she could likewise handle a paire of bellows about my pate, a paire of tongs a thwart my shins, a firebrand sometimes should flie at my head, a ladle full of scalding liquour otherwiles in my bosome, a three footed stoole, a pot, a candlesticke, or any other thing whatsoever came next her hand, all was one to her; and she had learned such a dexteritie in the delivrie, that they shoulde have come whirling about my eares. But in the end, hee devising with himselfe a remedy for these mischiefes, he found means to be made the Constable, hoping that his office would have bin a protection to him for a yeare, and that shee durst not have stricken her Majesties Officer. But within a day or two, it was his fortune to finde out a pot of strong ale, which he had set by in a corner for her owne drinking; and he (being thirsty) gave it such a sopp, that hee left very little behind; the which afterward when she came to seeke for, and found

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found her store so pitifully impaired, against his coming home at night, she provided her of a waller: and hee was no sooner entred the doores, but forth she comes with her cut-gell in her hand, and with such a terrible countenance, that were able to affright any man that should behold it.

Roger (said she) I had thought you would neuer haue giuen me occasion to be iealous of you; but now I see you loue a cup of strong ale better than you loue me: and do you not thinke then that I haue great reason to be displeased with your vnkindnesse towards mee, and to beate out that iake of loue that causeth you so lightly to regard me? Sissy (said he) take heed what you do, for you know that I am her Maiesties Officer, and here I charge you in the Queenes name that you hold your handes. What master Constable (said she) haue you gotten an inchantment for me: or do you thinke that your charme shall serue to excuse you? No sure, no, for now you haue deserued double punishment: first, you being an officer, if you offer wrong, your punishment must be so much the more grievous: and is it not meere iniustice to take that which was not provided for you? Next, you haue deserued to be wel punished, for the little reuerence you haue vsed in the execution of your office, commaunding mee in the Queenes name to holde my handes with your cappe on your head, not vsing any other dutie or reuerence. But master Constable, I will teach you how to vse an office: and with that she let flie at his head, shoulders, and armes, and would be still crying, Remember heereafter how you doe your office, remember your duty to the Queene, remember when you do commaund in her Maiesties name, that you put off your cap, and do it with reuerence, and such a number of other remembrances she gaue him, as (I thinke) there was neuer poore Constable before nor since, so instructed in an office as hee was. To tell of many other like remembrances which at other times she bestowed on him, would be but tedious: but the conclusion is, he is now rid of her, she being dead, hee keepe himselfe a widower (for her sake) as long as he liueth.

The

The Queene of

The seuenteenth Nouell.

Mahomet one of the Turkish Emperours, executes cursed cruelty vpon a Greeke maiden, whom he tooke prisoner at the winning of Constantinople.

If you do euer make any pzoofe or triall, to know of what trampe the arrowes of loue be, & what fruit they bring to them that do vse & practise the, I am assured you shalbe touched with some pittie when you vnderstand the beastly crueltie of an Infidell louer towards his Ladie. He of whom I will declare the history is Mahomet, not the false prophet, but the great grandfather of Soliman Orman Emperour of the Turkes, which reigned at that time: he it is that to the shame and eternall infamie of all Christian Princes of his time, did winne Constantinople, and tooke away the East empire from Constantine, a Christian emperour. Mahomet then hauing obtained so great a victorie at Constantinople, among the spoiles of that rich citie, there was a fonde Greeke maiden, of such rare and excellent beauty, as she allured the eyes of every wight to wonder and beholde her, as a thing miraculous, whose name was Hyerene, of the age of sirteene or seuentene yeres, whom a Captaine to gratifie his Lord did present: a iewell (as hee thought) most acceptable vnto him, aboue all things of the world. The emperour Mahomet, yong and wanton beyond measure, after that he had cast his eye vpon the yong maiden, & had grauen her beauty in his heart, gaue a straight charge that she should be kept for him, hoping after the tumult of the warre was ended, to bestow conuenient time vpon her. The retreict sounded, and the affairs of the empire reduced to former estate, remembering himselfe of the beauty of Hyerene, which had made a breach and entrie into his heart, commanded that she should be brought forth vnto him, and hauing viewed her at his pleasure, he felt himselfe surprised with the new name, that he conceived no other delight, but to play and dallie with her, in such sort, as his spirits being in loues full possession, loue dealt with him so cruelly, as he could take no

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rest day nor night, who yeelded himselfe such a pray to his
darling Hyerence, that he felt none other contentation in his
minde, but that which he receiued of her. And this amorous
passion endured the space of thre yeeres, taking such vigour
and increase by little and little, that he beganne to forget that
which appertained to the ornament and honor of his empire,
leauing the whole administration of publike causes vnto his
Baschats, he himselfe being so negligent, as he reposed in
them all matters concerning the state of the empire. During
this disorder, the vulgar people began secretly to grudge, as
well for the confusion and disorder of the empire, as for the ill
gouernment of the same (and specially because the Baschats
corrupted with auarice, imployed themselves to the particu-
lar profit, and to enrich themselves with the spoile of the peo-
ple:) the Janisaries on the other side a warlike people, and
brought vp in continuall exercise of armes, began with open
voice to detract and slander their lord, commonly complain-
ing how he consumed his life like an effeminate person with-
out inferring or doing any profit to the empire. To be short,
the matter came to such desolation, as it might rather haue
bene called a sedition, then a murmur: & yet there was none
so hardy, as durst attempt to declare the same to the empe-
rour, knowing him to be of nature terrible, cruel & rigorous,
that with a word would put him to death that went about to
withdraue him from his desire: so that hee was so drunke
with the beautie of the Greeke, that the least matter where-
with they might giue occasion to withdraue him fro his neg-
ligent life, was enough to draw him into rage and fury. This
poore emperour was so bewitched, as not onely he consumed
dayes & nights with her, but he burned with continual ielou-
sie, whose beauty was so liuely painted in the inward parts of
his minde and heart, that he remained thus overwhelmed in
heastly pleasure. Every man in particular, & all in generall
conspired against him with one determinate minde, to yeeld
no more obedience vnto him in time to come, and purposed to
chuse some emperour that were more warlike and martiall,
through

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through whose succour and counsell they might not only con-
ferre the things gotten, but amplifie the bounds & limits of
their empire. Mustapha which was brought vp with the em-
perour, a gentle personage, franke of talke, and so neere to his
maiesty, that he might go into his chamber although a Greeke
was present: when he perceiued conuenient time, such as he
desired to haue, repaired to the emperour vpon a day, who li-
king wel of his deuices, walked alone with him into his gar-
den: to whom after he had made great reuerence, according
to their custome, he said: My souereigne lord & master, if I
might speake freely, without seruite feare, which stayeth me,
or if y^e terror of your displeasure might not abash me, I would
willingly declare vnto your maiesty that which concerneth
not onely your security & sauegard, but (which is more) the
safely of your whole empire. Whome Mahomet answered
with mery countenance, in these words: Cast away such cold
feare as stayeth thee, & speake hardy thy mind, shew me what
it is that toucheth me. I doubt, & it shall please your maiesty,
lest I shall seeme ouer presumptuous, and rash, if I discover
the secrets of my heart; but ouer ancient education, the duty
of my conscience, with the experience that you haue alwayes
had of my fidelity, haue so much forced me, as being no lon-
ger able to rule my selfe, I am constrained (by what vertuous
prouocation I know not) to manifest things vnto you, that
both time & necessity will make you thinke them good & ne-
cessary: although (it may so be) that now your eyes be so bound
up in the vaille of your disordinate affection, that you can not
digest or take the same in good part. The life (my lord) which
you haue led since the taking of Constantinople, and the ex-
cessiue pleasures wherein you haue bene plunged these three
yeres, is occasion, that not only your souldiers, and the rest of
your popular people, but the most faithfull lords of your em-
pire, do murmure, conspire, & coniure against you: and par-
don me (my lord) if I speake so vntoerently in things tou-
ching your preservation, for there is no man, but doeth verie
much maruaile of this great & new alteration that appeareth

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in you, which doeth so abase you, & maketh you to degenerate from your ancient generositie & valiance: your selfe hath giuen ouer your selfe to be a spoile & pray to a simple woman, that you wholly depend vpon her flatteries & allurements; reason or counsell can take no place in your passionate & afflicted heart: but I humbly beseech your maiesty to enter a litle into your self, and make a suruey of your life that you haue led these thre yeres past. The glory of your ancestors acquired and come by so much shedding of so much blood, kept by so great prudence, conserued by so happy counsell, haue they no representation or shew before your face: the remembrance of their memorabile victories, doeth it not touch the depth of your conscience: the magnanimitie & valiance, whereby they be immortalized, and their fame registred thorow the whole world, is it extinguished in you: their trophees & monuments gotten, and aduanced to all the corners of the earth, be they throwen downe and defaced, from the siege of your remembrance: But where is now the ardent desire which boyled in you from your infancie, to make Italie tributarie vnto you, and to cause your selfe to be crowned at Rome, emperor alwell of the Orient as of the Occident: this is not the way to amplify and enlarge your empire, but rather to restrain and diminish the same: this is not the way to preserve it, but to spoile it, and to make it lesse. If Ottomon the first Turke or stocke of your gentle familie & kintred, had thus giuen himselfe to be corrupted in idlenesse, you had not now inherited the noble kingdome of Greece, nor gouerned the countries of Galatia and Bithinia, and many other prouinces, which inuiron the great sea. Semblably his sonne Orcan (a liuely image of his father, and a follower of his valiant facts, had not triumphed ouer Licaonia, Phrigia, Caria, nor dilated the boundes of his empire, to Hellesponte. What shall I speake of Amurates the successor of Orcan, who was the first that inuaded Europa, conquered Thracia, Siria, Rasia, and Bulgaria. And Baiazet likewise, did not he cut off the head of the great Tamberlaine, which called himselfe the scourge of

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God, and brought into the field foure hundred thousand
Sithians a horsebacke, and sixe hundred thousand footmen:
Will I passe over with silence the curteous exploits of your
grandfather, Bahomet, who conquered Macedonia, and
made the countries to feele the edge of his sword, even to the
sea Conicom, letting passe manie wonderfull expeditions
and ioyles, by him made against the Lidians, and Scicilli-
ans: but now I cannot reuine the memorie of your father
Amurate, but to my great sorrow & grieve, who by the space
of fortie years, made the sea and earth to tremble and quake
and with the furie of his strong hand, vled such cruell re-
uengement ouer the greeks, that the memorie of the wounds
doe remaine at this daie, euen to the mountaines of Tho-
mas, and Pindus, he subiugated the Thracians: made tribut-
arie Athens, Boetia, Aetolia, Caramania, and all the bar-
barous nations, from Dozea, to the straites of Corinthe,
what need I here to hyng in the cruel battaile that he fought
with the Emperour Sigismounde, and Phillippe Duke of
Burgundia, wherein he ouerthawe the whole force of the
christians, tooke the Emperour prisoner, and the Duke of
Burgundia also, whom he sent to Andionopolis: or to re-
member other fierce armies which he sent into Hungaria,
whereof your Maestie is a faithfull witnes, your selfe being
still there in your owne person.

Judge then my Lord what diligent, and intollerable tra-
uel he vled in his manifold glorious enterprises, and famous
victories, doe you thinke that if he had beene idle in his pal-
lace, amongst the Ladies you had inherited your Empire or
had now beene Lord of so manie provinces: which he is not
sufficient to rule, that cannot provide to confirm, and establish
the same: there be many of your subiects and vassals at this
day, that doe obey and honour your Maestie, more for feare,
than good loue they beare you, that would rebel against you,
if fortune would turne her back. The christians of long time
(as you know) haue sworne your ruine & destruction: moreo-
uer they say that their high bishop the Pope of Rome, hath
conuo-

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condemned al his prelates to vnite, & reconciled the princes
and monarchs of christendome together to ouerrun you, & to
take the scepter out of your hands, & to dispoile you of your
empire, but what know we whether theyle ioine their forces
with the power of the Persian Sophi, your capital enemy,
or with the Sultan of Egypt, your ancient aduersary, which
if it come to passe (as god forbid) your Empire wil be consu-
med: gather your wits then together, frō henceforth my Lord
& cal againe reason, which so many yeares you haue banished
away from you: awake out of the deepe sleepe, that hath sea-
led by your eyes, imitate & follow the steps of your ancestors
which euer loued better one day of honor then a hundred li-
uing yeares of shame and reproch, attend to the government
of your empire, leaue off this effeminate life, receiue againe
the smell of your generositie and vertue, and if you cannot at
one time cut off & remoue all that amorous heate, which in-
fernieth so your heart, moderat the same by litle and litle,
and giue some hope to your people, which thinke you to be
vicerly lost, and desperate of recovery, or if so be the greeke
doe so much delight you, who shall let you to cary her with
you in al your loynes and expeditions: why, cannot you both
enioy her beautie together, and vse the practise of armes: me-
thinke that your pleasure shalbe greater after you haue won
some victorie, and subdued some countrie, to enioy her in your
armes, then to remaine in a house with eternall infamy, and
continuall grudging of your subiects: but proue I praeie you,
to seperate your selfe certaine daies from her, and you shall
certainly iudge, how far more passing, the pleasure be so de-
ferred, then those that be daily vled: yet one thing more, & if
please your Maiestie, there resteth to be said, which is, that al
the victories of your progenitors, or the conquests, which
your selfe hath made, be to smal purpose if you doe not keepe
them, & encrease them, the keeping of a thing gotten, being
of no lesse glory and praise, than the conquest: be now then a
conquerour of your selfe, humbly beseeching your Maiestie,
that if I haue spoken any thing, disagreeable to your minde,

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according to your wonted clemencie to pardon the same, and to impute the fault to my bounden duetie, and the care that I haue of your honoz and safetie. Mahomet, after he had heard the long discourse of this slaue, stood as still as a blocke, and fixing his eyes vpon the ground, with sodaine change of colour, declared by outward signes, the cogitations and vquietnes of his mind in such wise, as the poore slaue Mustapha, seeing in him those alterations, was in doubt of his life; whose words so pricked the Emperors heart, that he knew not what to doe, or whereupon to be resolved: and feeling his conscience troubled with a furions battel, knowing euidentlie that Mustapha had spoken the truth, and that he vttered the same like a trustie servant to his maister: but on the other side the beautie of the greek was still before his eyes, and the mind he had to abandon her, gaue him such alarme, that he seemed at that instant, as though his heart had beene torne out of his bellie, and thus moued with diuers tempests, and disquieted with sundrie thoughts, hauing his eyes inflamed with great rage and furie, he said vnto him: although thou hast spoken vneruentlie enough, yet our education togither, and the fidelitie that I haue proued in thee in time past shall be thy pardone for this time. To the purpose; before the sunne doth compasse the Zodiacke, I will let it be knowen to thee and other, what puissance and power, gouernes mee, whether I am able to brydle mine affection or not; take order in the mean time, that all my noble men, the Baschats, and the principall of my men of war, be assembled togither to morrowe in the midd of the great hall of my pallace. This determination finished, the Emperour went into the greeke with whom hee reioiced all that day and night, and made more of her then euer he did before; and the more to flatter her, he dined with her, and commanded that after dinner, she should adorne herselfe with her bestiewels, and deck her with the costliest apparell shee had; whereunto the poore wench obeyed, not knowing that it was her funeral garment: on the other side Mustapha vncertain of the Emperors minde at the hower appointed, caused all the nobilitie

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nobilitie to be assembled in the hall, euerie of them marua-
ling what moued y^e Emperour so to doe, since he had so long
time shut vp himselfe, without shewing his person abroad:
being thus assembled, and euerie man talking diuersly of this
matter, according as the affection serued: behold the Empe-
rour entred the hall, leading the Greeke by the hand, who be-
ing adorned otherwise than she was wont to be, was accom-
panied and garnished with beautie, so rare and excellent that
she resembled rather an heauenlie Goddesse, then a humaine
creature: the Turke being come into the hall, after that the
Lords had made their reuerence, according to the wonted
maner, he holding stil the faire greeke and the left hand, and
stoode still in the midst of the same, looking furiously round
about him, he said vnto them. So farre as I vnderstand, all
you doe mutine and grudge, because I (being vanquished
with loue) cannot be deuided, nor yet content my selfe day
nor night from the presence of this greeke: but I doe knowe
none of you all so continent, and chaste in loue, that if he had
in possession, a thing so rare and pretious, so amiable, indow-
ed with beautie so excellent, but before he could forget her,
and giue her ouer, hee would three times be well aduised.
What saie you to the matter: euerie of you shall haue free li-
bertie, franchlie to tell me your minde: but they rayt with an
incredible admiration, to see so faire a thing, saide that he had
with great reason passed his time with her. Whereunto the
barbarous cruell prince answered: well, now then I will
make you to vnderstand, that there is no earthly thing that
can binde vp, or captivate my senses so much, but that from
henceforth I will follow the glorie, of mine ancestors, and
imitate the valiance of the Ottomans, which is so fixed in
my brest, as nothing but death is able to blot it out of my re-
membrance. Those wordes finished, incontinently with one
of his handes, hee caught the Greeke by the haire of the
head, and with his other hand, he drew forth his falchion
from his side, and folding his hands about her golden locks,
at one blowe, he strake of her head, to the great terrour of
them

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them all; when he had so done, he said vnto them: Now
ye knowe, whether your Emperour is able to repressle, and
briole his affections, or not. Within a while after, meaning
to discharge the rest of his choler, he adressed a camp of foure
score or an hundred thousand men: with whome piercing
Bosnie, he besieged Belgrade, where fortune was so con-
trarie vnto him that he was put to flight, and lost there
a notable battaile against the christians, vnder
the conduct of John Huniades, sur-
named le Blanche.

FINIS.



